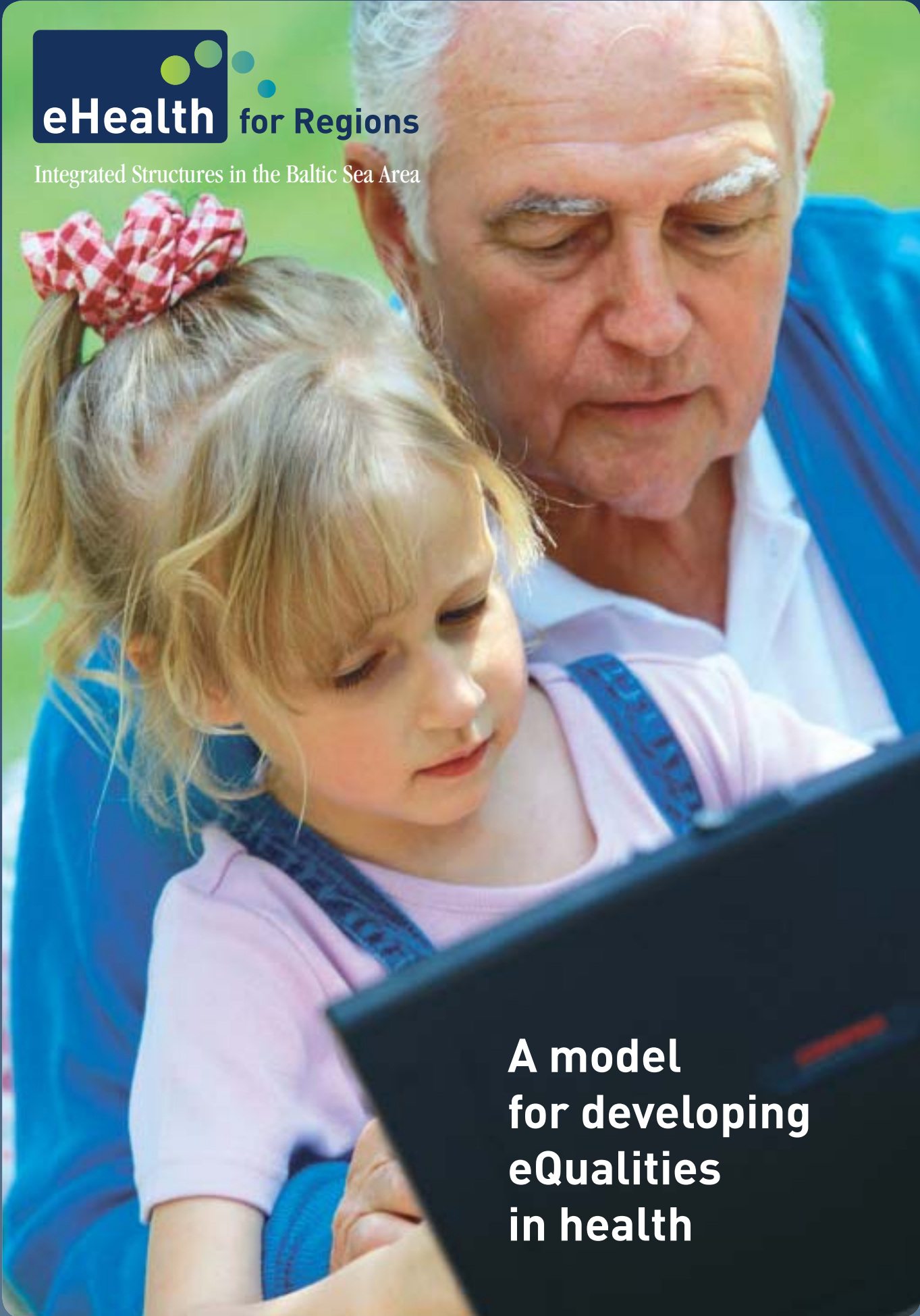




eHealth for Regions

Integrated Structures in the Baltic Sea Area



**A model
for developing
eQualities
in health**

www.eHealthforRegions.net

Why "eHealth for Regions"?

The European states and regions are facing similar social, political, and economic challenges today and in the future. The health care sectors in particular have to deal with the rising demand for services in addition to limited budgetary conditions.

Furthermore, the regions are faced with the additional challenge of ensuring that citizens in both urban centres and peripheral areas have the same access to health care services. Such balanced living conditions are necessary to prevent rural-urban migration and the consequent structural problems. This becomes even more evident during the course of demographic change and in the increasing attractiveness of living and working in urban areas.

Thus, access to high-quality health care services for all citizens, regardless of where they live, is crucial for the attractiveness and competitiveness of European regions.

Health for all

"eHealth for Regions" is a project part-financed by the European Union within the Baltic Sea Region INTER-REG III B programme. The 17 partners participating in the project come from regions covering almost the whole Baltic Sea area and together they pursue the vision of "Health for all" citizens. They promote the practice of eHealth in each of their regions. The European Commission describes eHealth as "the application of information and communications technologies across the whole range of functions that affect the health sector". eHealth is an important step towards providing better quality health care services which are accessible for all citizens, both in urban centres and rural areas. The partners also join forces to overcome the national inequalities that are evident in the health care supply in the Baltic Sea region.



The Baltic Sea region - a model for Europe

The project is a starting point for developing a model for transnational co-operation in the field of eHealth in the Baltic Sea region. Within the framework of "eHealth for Regions", knowledge and best practice experiences will be exchanged, transregional strategies developed and new technologies tested and implemented. The findings and solutions can then be transferred to other European regions and contribute to the modernisation of European health systems.

eHealth

What are our Objectives?

Moving towards a "European eHealth Area"

The European Commission has set the goal of moving towards a "European eHealth Area". The European Union promotes transnational co-operation between national health systems and stimulates the further development of transnational structure formations. In particular, advancement in the transnational use of eHealth solutions is aimed at: "eHealth will open the door to more easily accessible and better quality health care. It can reduce errors, speed up treatment and offer important cost savings." the Commission of the European Communities



The objectives of the project

It is in this spirit that "eHealth for Regions" pioneers a common Baltic Sea eHealth Area. The project brings together the relevant actors from all the regions and involves those who are concerned with health systems as well as regional development. The partners are convinced that such a cross-sectoral partnership is essential for citizens to benefit from all the potentials offered by eHealth and for promoting the attractiveness of the regions.

The specific objectives are:

- to enhance the attractiveness of the regions by using eHealth as an instrument for regional development,
- to improve the accessibility and quality of health care available to citizens in urban and rural areas ("pervasive healthcare on the basis of eHealth"),
- to share knowledge and resources through transnational transfer, standardisation and localisation of eHealth solutions,
- to promote the acceptance of patients, doctors and other actors in the health care sector with regard to eHealth services,
- to build a transnational, cross-sectoral network and develop a business model promoting co-operation in the field of eHealth in the Baltic Sea region,
- to experience the transnational network and to co-operate in the field of telecardiology and other fields.

for Regions

How do we Proceed?

Dialogue and communication

“eHealth for Regions” is built on dialogue and communication. The partners constantly learn from each other with regard to the different health systems, the particular needs and best practice solutions. They identify common challenges and develop joint solutions. Thus, a pillar of the project is the exchange of experience and the transfer of know-how.

This process requires continuous coordination and management. Therefore, a common strategy for transnational co-operation is fundamental, whereby the co-operation partners agree on their goals and how their co-operation should be organised.

Network building

The project’s core strategic co-operation concept is the transnational and cross-sectoral network in which 17 partners from 7 nations take part. They include regional governments, offices and authorities, health insurance companies, regional development companies, universities, hospitals and clinics as well as others involved in the health service. This cross-sectoral network of partners guarantees both to advance regional development and enable better health care.

Implementation of solutions

The partners will experience concrete transnational co-operation by implementing joint eHealth solutions in the scope of telecardiology and other fields. The results and experiences will be transferable and will serve as a model for further joint activities.



What are our Activities?



The implementation of the project is divided into four work-packages (WP). Work-packages 1 and 2 will create the strategic framework for the transnational network and will specify the structure and organisation of the co-operation. In work-packages 3 and 4, technical solutions and standards for transnational eHealth applications will be developed and implemented in the field of telecardiology.

Structures and processes (WP 1)

Work-package 1 consists of a detailed co-operation concept covering various areas, ranging from strategy development, planning the exact framework of eHealth structures and processes to its implementation among the partners. Strategies are to be developed to gain the acceptance, among others, of patients and physicians as regards eHealth to enable patients to participate in health solutions, to establish eHealth in everyday health care and to intensify co-operation among the partners.

Network and business model (WP 2)

A sustainable transnational and cross-sectoral network will be created within work-package 2. A business model will also be developed to provide a lasting contribution to the stabilisation of the transnational co-operation and will form the basis of future projects and investments. In addition, models for transnational co-operation in the field of eHealth will be created.

Technical aspects (WP 3)

During work-package 3, existing technical solutions will be evaluated, adjusted and regionally adapted for the pilot phase to be implemented in the course of work-package 4, as well as for the different co-operation fields developed during work-package 1 which are to be transferred and localised in the partner regions. The outcome will be the identification of technical solutions that are appropriate for the standard environment and technical infrastructure implemented in the partner regions.

Pilot implementation (WP 4)

A pilot programme in the field of telecardiology will be implemented for experiencing transnational standardisation, transfer and localisation. Structures and processes will be implemented, tested and adjusted in the partner countries. The technical solutions derived from work-package 3 will therefore be used for co-operation in the field of telecardiology. The experience gained can then be transferred to other areas of co-operation.

Integrated Structures in

Who are the Partners?

Denmark

- Viborg County Council

Finland

- Regional Council of South Ostrobothnia
- Seinäjoki Polytechnic
- South Ostrobothnia Health Care District

Germany

- AOK Schleswig-Holstein, Statutory Health Insurance
- District of Segeberg, Regional Development and Labour Market
- Ev.-Luth. Diakonissenanstalt Flensburg, Hospital
- Ministry of Social Affairs, Public Health and Consumer Protection of the Land Schleswig-Holstein

Lithuania

- Kaunas Region Cardiology Society
- Kaunas University of Medicine Heart Center
- Vilnius University Hospital Santariskiu Klinikos

Norway

- Vestfold Hospital Trust

Poland

- City Hospital / Public Corporation of Healthcare, Lebork
- Lebork Town Municipality
- Medical University of Gdansk, 1st Department of Cardiology

Sweden

- Region Skane, Economic Development and Innovation
- Region Skane, Management of the Health and Medical Services Department

At a Glance

- 17 project partners from 7 countries in the Baltic Sea region
- First meeting of the project partners in autumn 2003
- The Baltic Sea Region Interreg III B project commences in June 2004
- 2004 - 2007: three-year project phase
- Project completion in June 2007
- Activities divided into four work-packages
- Financing of 3.27 million Euros
- Financial investment provided by the partners, Norway and the European Union.



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the Baltic Sea Area