



HIMSS24 European Conference - Nordic Community Session Overview

The HIMSS Europe 2024 conference in Rome featured several key presentations that highlighted innovative approaches and projects aimed at improving digital health literacy, technology assessment, and data utilization in the Nordic region. This summary consolidates the insights and findings from four notable presentations.

1. DIGITAL HEALTH LITERACY AND THE IDEAHL PROJECT

Professor Sarah Wamala Andersson from Mälardalen University, Sweden, discussed the critical need for a comprehensive EU strategy to enhance digital health literacy and reduce health inequalities across Europe. She emphasized that digital health literacy is essential for effectively utilizing digital health technologies (DHTs), which are crucial given the rising prevalence of chronic diseases and increasing life expectancy. The IDEAHL project, funded by the EU, aims to empower EU citizens to use digital tools for active health management, involving 14 EU partners and focusing on co-creating solutions with citizens from various vulnerable groups.



The project seeks to map health literacy research and develop a unified tool to measure digital health literacy comprehensively, aiming to address disparities in DHT usage across different demographics.

2. EDIHTA PROJECT FOR DIGITAL HEALTH TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

Kari Dyb from the Norwegian Centre for E-Health Research presented the EDiHTA project, which aims to establish the first European Digital Health Technology Assessment (HTA) framework. Coordinated by Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Italy, the project involves 16 European partners and has a budget of 7.5 million Euros. It seeks to harmonize HTA processes to ensure the systematic and safe assessment of DHTs, promoting their integration into healthcare systems. The project includes analyzing national and European policies to design the HTA framework and piloting it in five European countries. EDiHTA aims to enhance healthcare quality and sustainability by fostering collaboration among healthcare providers, technology developers, and policymakers.

3. VALO PROJECT AND THE EUROPEAN HEALTH DATA SPACE

Markus Kalliola from the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra introduced the VALO project, which aims to maximize the benefits of the European Health Data Space (EHDS) for Nordic countries. Funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers, the project seeks to strengthen Nordic collaboration in the secondary use of health data and prepare each country for EHDS legislation. The VALO project includes developing a common model for collaboration, establishing an EHDS2 Competence Forum, and conducting a federated data analysis pilot using the OMOP Common Data Model. The project's phases involve planning, stakeholder engagement, and implementation, with the goal of improving healthcare outcomes through enhanced data utilization.



4. SENTINEL AND CAPRI PROJECTS IN DENMARK

Claus Duedal Pedersen and Trine Lynge Albertsen discussed two Danish initiatives: Sentinel and CAPRI. Sentinel is a tool for data-driven quality development in primary care, collecting and integrating clinical data automatically to generate quality reports for healthcare professionals. CAPRI is a Clinical Adaptive Platform for Research and Implementation, designed to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of clinical trials by reusing and standardizing trial infrastructure and data. Both projects aim to enhance healthcare delivery and research by leveraging existing data and minimizing additional data entry, thus improving efficiency and clinical outcomes. In conclusion, the HIMSS Europe 2024 presentations underscored the critical role of digital health literacy, systematic technology assessment, and efficient data utilization in advancing healthcare. Collaborative efforts across European countries and innovative projects like IDEAHL, EDiHTA, and VALO aim to address current challenges and improve health outcomes through targeted strategies and technological advancements.

DISCUSSING FURTHER...

The Nordic meeting focused on the role of Nordic countries within the European Health Data Space, examining progress and challenges. Klaus from Denmark and Malin Söderlund from Sweden led the discussion, with Roger Lim from the Netherlands providing an outside perspective. Roger highlighted the envy from the Netherlands regarding Nordic digital health organization and acknowledged the substantial influence of the Nordics on European health data legislation, particularly through the Swedish presidency's efforts.

Roger noted that while the Nordics were not always at the forefront, they played a significant role in negotiations, contributing practical experience.

Markus emphasized the Nordic efficiency and structured approach in European projects, attributing the success of the Data2 project to this mentality.

Klaus discussed the informal yet effective collaboration among Nordic countries, which has facilitated knowledge transfer and practical implementation of health projects. He argued that while the Nordics have not been overly ambitious, their practical approach has been beneficial. Malin highlighted that despite being advanced in digital health, the Nordics need to accelerate their pace to achieve their goals.

The discussion also touched on trust in government, with the Nordics having high levels of public trust compared to the Netherlands, which impacts policy implementation. The panel emphasized the need for balance between risk avoidance and innovation, noting that being overly cautious can hinder progress.

Questions from the audience addressed trust and risk, with Roger explaining the complexities in the Netherlands due to public distrust. Klaus added that building trust requires delivering good services and ensuring safety. The panel agreed on the importance of being more daring and less risk-averse to foster innovation.

Finally, the panelists called for continued Nordic collaboration and openness, encouraging the sharing of knowledge and experiences to strengthen both the Nordic and European health sectors. They emphasized the need for concrete steps to accelerate digitalization and make the Nordics a model for health innovation.



Prepared by

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