

Chain of TRUST

Understanding patients' and health professionals' perspective
on **Telehealth** and building confidence and acceptance



Findings & Recommendations

Closing Conference
Brussels, 24 January 2013



The Chain of Trust project

Specific objectives

1. Knowledge gathering

To improve available knowledge of the specific views - needs, perceptions on the added value and concerns - among patients and health professionals with regard to telehealth services

2. Raising awareness and understanding

To increase awareness and understanding of users' perspective on telehealth amongst patients' and health professionals' organisations and health authorities at European and Member State level

Project Consortium

European Patients Forum (EPF, Project Coordinator)



Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME)



Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU)



European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN)



Norwegian Centre for Integrated Care and Telemedicine (NST)



Latvian Umbrella Body for Disability and Patient Organisations

(SUSTENTO)



Methodology – Knowledge gathering I

- **Literature review:** to collect baseline information on patient and health professionals perspective on telehealth - **168** scientific articles reviewed
- **Online survey:** To collect quantitative information and compare with literature findings - **6704** responses received

	Deutsch	<u>Patienten</u>	<u>Angehörige der Gesundheitsberufe</u>
	Ελληνικά	<u>Ασθενείς</u>	<u>Επαγγελματίες υγείας</u>
	English	<u>Patients</u>	<u>Health professionals</u>
	Español	<u>Pacientes</u>	<u>Profesionales del sector sanitario</u>
	Français	<u>Patients</u>	<u>Professionnels de santé</u>
	Italiano	<u>Pazienti</u>	<u>Professionisti sanitari</u>
	Latviešu	<u>Pacientiem</u>	<u>Veselības aprūpes speciālistiem</u>
	Nederlands	<u>Patiënten</u>	<u>Zorgverleners</u>
	Norsk	<u>Pasienter</u>	<u>Helsepersonell</u>
	Polski	<u>Pacjenci</u>	<u>Pracownicy Opieki Zdrowotnej</u>
	Português	<u>Pacientes</u>	<u>Profissionais de saúde</u>

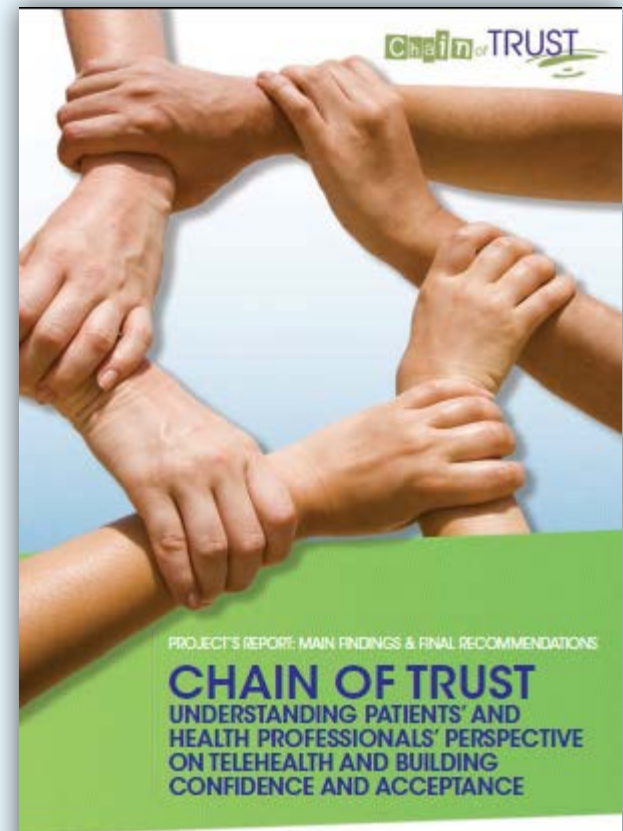
Methodology – Knowledge gathering II

- **Six National workshops** in GR, LV, NL, NO, PL, PT: to collect qualitative information to validate and complement online survey findings - **240 participants** in total from the four user groups
- **European focus groups** to formulate policy recommendations - **42 participants** in total



Methodology – Raising awareness and understanding

- **Six National roundtables** in GR, LV, NL, NO, PL, PT to raise awareness of national stakeholders on the project findings and policy recommendations and promote the integration of users' perspective in national telehealth agendas and plans.
- **Liasing with other projects**
- **Final conference**
- **Communication tools:**
 - Two videos
 - Final report on the findings and recommendations



Key project Findings

- USERS' KNOWLEDGE OF TELEHEALTH AND CURRENT AND POTENTIAL USE
- MAIN ISSUES REGARDING USERS' TRUST AND ACCEPTANCE
- BENEFITS FROM THE USERS' PERSPECTIVE
- DRAWING CONCLUSIONS: KEY DRIVERS FOR USERS' ACCEPTANCE

USERS' KNOWLEDGE OF TELEHEALTH AND CURRENT AND POTENTIAL USE

- Poor knowledge and experience of telehealth
- Lack of understanding of telehealth, especially among the patients
- Health professionals play a major role in informing patients and citizens at large about telehealth services available
- Despite this poor overall awareness, patients and health professionals are generally quite willing to use telehealth.

Great interest among both patients and health professionals in being involved in decision-making, designing, testing and deploying telehealth.

MAIN ISSUES REGARDING USERS' TRUST AND ACCEPTANCE I

The human dimension

- Telehealth has been mainly driven by technology rather than by the needs of people
- Trust plays more than ever a key role in patient-health professional relations
- Patients perceive a risk of 'impersonality' and of neglect of 'psychological factors'

Capacity of Users

- Patients fear the burden of responsibility and lack of skills - telehealth services need to integrate eHealth literacy skills
- Self-confidence has to be supported with training and user-friendly applications

MAIN ISSUES REGARDING USERS' TRUST AND ACCEPTANCE II

The delivery of healthcare

- Telehealth as a complement/added value to and not as a replacement of conventional services
- Access and health inequalities: telehealth should fill the gap and not exacerbate inequalities
- Decisions on whether to adopt telehealth will depend to a great extent to its perceived effects on patient safety
- Organisational aspects: change in routine, workload and lack of support from management are barriers for health professionals' buy in.

The legal framework

- Call to regulators to clarify licence, liability and reimbursement issues
- While privacy not problematic, confidentiality still an issue BUT overly strict data protection and security systems should not hinder the sharing of health information, and ultimately the health service

MAIN BENEFITS FROM THE USERS' PERSPECTIVE I

Common benefits

- Improved quality of care through more personalised, continuous, efficient and responsive services
- Improved access to healthcare for:
 - patients living in underserved areas
 - socio-economically disadvantaged patients
- Improved patients' adherence through more active involvement of patients and more regular monitoring from health professionals

MAIN BENEFITS FROM THE USERS' PERSPECTIVE II

Benefits specific to health professionals

- Improved co-operation with colleagues through sharing of information, consultations, support – interoperability a pre-condition for that
- Continuity of care - *68% of health professionals/users and 55% of non-users said that telehealth helps them to stay more regularly in touch with patients*

Benefits specific to patients

- Patient empowerment – telehealth improves knowledge of the condition, and facilitate involvement in the care process in partnership with health professionals.
- Quality of life – e.g. increased self-confidence, better awareness of symptoms or improved independence
- Economic benefits: e.g. from e.g. less travel and days off work

MAIN KEY DRIVERS FOR USERS' ACCEPTANCE

- To accept telehealth, patients and health professionals want it to be user-centric as opposed to technology-driven.
- Telehealth should not negatively affect the patient–health professional relationship, but rather aim to increase mutual trust;
- Telehealth needs to deliver real benefits and add value to users in relation to solely conventional healthcare;
- Health professionals and patients will accept telehealth services only as long as they have at least the same safety and reliability standard as conventional health services;
- Self-confidence and competence in using telehealth services and mutual confidence between users, are crucial and should not be underestimated

Project Recommendations

Awareness and Users' needs

Awareness and Understanding

1. Awareness campaigns on telehealth services and benefits needed for both patients and health professionals;
2. Call for the adoption of a harmonised European set of definitions used in the field of e-Health;

Telehealth must be user-driven

3. Telehealth services must **embrace end-users' needs**, to that end patients and health professionals have to take the lead in telehealth developments
4. Necessary to **maintain** a certain level of **face-to-face consultations**
5. An **incentive system** should be introduced to favour the deployment of telehealth services that **lead to user-centred improved health outcomes**.

Education and support are a must

6. eHealth and telehealth related **knowledge and skills** should be included as an optional subject in the health professionals curricula and be part of Continuing Professional Development
7. Patients and informal caregivers must be provided with **education, training** and **support systems** to empower them to uptake the changes entailed by the introduction of telehealth
8. **Healthcare management** should support health professionals to effectively integrate telehealth in the delivery of care

The political commitment that is needed

10. **National strategies** on eHealth and telehealth need to involve organised civil society, to ensure that they are long-term and minimally impacted by political changes;
11. Effective and **transparent dialogue and collaboration** between institution, end-users and other stakeholders;
12. Clear framework needed: clarify new roles, responsibilities, data protection and security, liability and reimbursement schemes;
13. The EU should support the **creation of synergies** between different telehealth and eHealth initiatives to avoid duplication and promote sharing of good practices;
14. The EU should support MS in providing the required **infrastructure** for telehealth by promoting the use of EU funding; particularly the Structural and Cohesion Funds;

Telehealth in support of healthcare delivery

15. Member States have to exploit the opportunities offered by telehealth in order to **fill the gap** between patients and citizens' needs for services and their accessibility and quality;
16. Telehealth must be used to better **support, optimise and complement the delivery of healthcare**;
17. The implementation of telehealth should go hand in hand with the set-up of **community-based care and support systems** for patients and their informal caregivers.



More Info?

www.chainoftrust.eu

A screenshot of the Chain of Trust website homepage. The header features the 'Chain of TRUST' logo and the tagline 'Understanding patients' and health professionals' perspective on Telehealth and building confidence and acceptance'. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Home, Project, Consortium, Public docs, News, Events, Contact us, and Private Area. The main content area contains two paragraphs of text describing the project's objectives and goals. At the bottom, there are logos for the European Union and the Health Programme 2008-2013, along with a text box stating that the project is co-funded by the Public Health Programme of the European Union managed by the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC).

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Home | Project | Consortium | Public docs | News | Events | Contact us | Private Area

The "Chain of Trust" project started off in January 2011 with the overall objective of assessing the perspective of the main end users of telehealth services across the EU to see whether and how views have evolved since the initial deployment of telehealth and what barriers there still are to building confidence in and acceptance of this innovative type of services.

Ultimately the project will aim at strengthening significantly the levels of awareness and trust for all key stakeholders. The findings and the recommendations will constitute a unique tool to inform policies and decision-making at various levels.

The Chain of Trust project is co-funded by the [Public Health Programme](#) of the European Union managed by the [Executive Agency for Health and Consumers \(EAHC\)](#).

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