

# eHealth

priorities and strategies  
in European countries



**Fact sheet**

# France

March 2007

Towards the Establishment  
of a European eHealth  
Research Area



# France

## Strategic perspective

In France, during the past decade, the importance of Health Information Systems and eHealth has been expressed in a series of laws in the field of public health and social security. Under the responsibility of the Minister of Health, the development of eHealth initiatives continues to be a major objective for the French government.

### OFFICIAL REPORTS

Recent official reports concerning aspects of eHealth development in France include:

- A report by the Parliamentary Office for the Evaluation of Scientific and Technologic Choices (OPECST), entitled “New Information Technologies and Healthcare Systems” (June 2004).
- A report by Bérengère Poletti, Member of the Parliament (projet de loi de financement de la sécurité sociale, 2005).
- Reports, mainly focused on the governance issues, from the “Cour des Comptes” and the “Inspection Générale des Affaires Sociales” (IGAS).

The recommendations of the OPECST report which focused mainly on hospitals include, among others: an outline of eHealth funding for hospitals; creation of a specialisation in eHealth and associated specific training by medical faculties; primary care providers charged with public duties should have online links to a hospital; potential creation of a regional eHealth coordination structure under the responsibility of the director of the Regional Agency for Hospitalisation, on behalf of the Ministry of Health, in partnership with local elected authorities; and generalised eHealth in all penitentiary settings. The new global plan for the hospital sector was recently announced by the Minister of Health under the “Hospital 2012” plan.

Four major objectives have been outlined for eHealth in France:

- Contribute to national public health objectives: improve organisation and coordination of care.

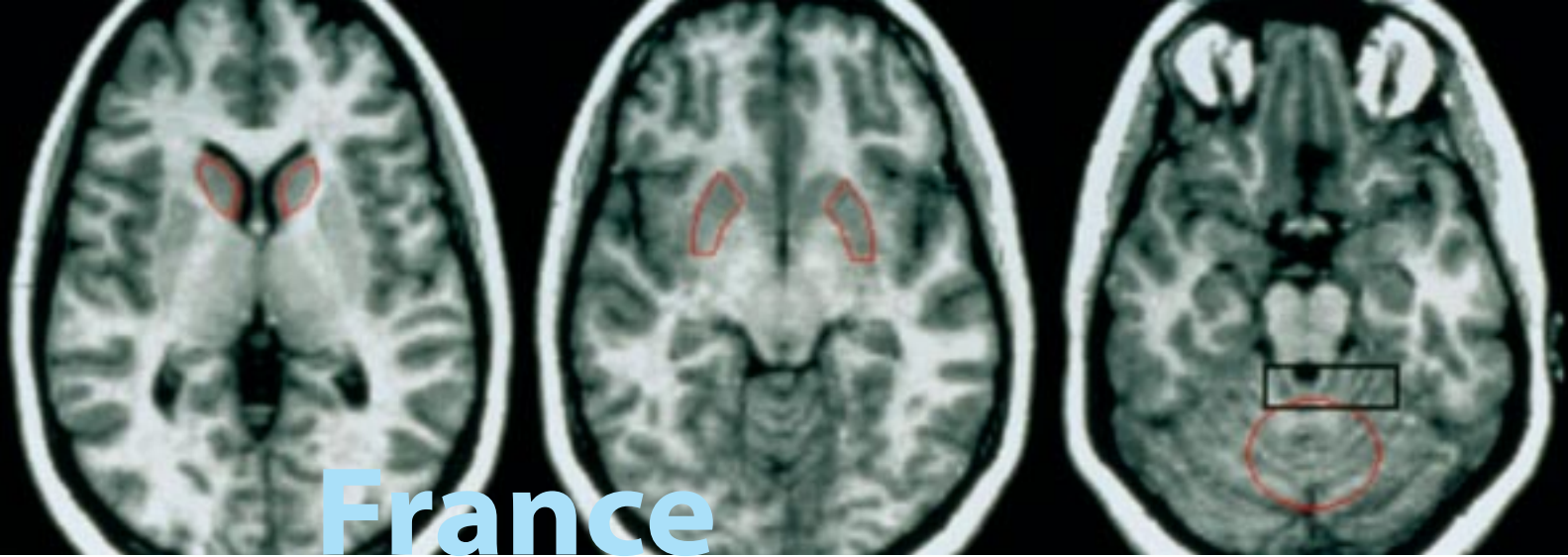


- Contribute to national planning objectives: facilitate the access to proximity healthcare, in particular in rural areas.
- Contribute to the training of healthcare professionals.
- Ameliorate the problems arising from demographic change (for citizens, patients and health care professionals).

### STRATEGIC PLANS

The national strategy is mostly targeted at the optimisation and reengineering of the healthcare system. The underlying global objectives are to achieve improvements in the quality and the continuity of care for each citizen. On this basis financial resources have been devoted to the development of eHealth through a diverse range of national plans, among which the most recent include:

- Périn@t (perinatal plan)
- e-s@nte 2000, 2001, 2002
- FMESPP (Fund for the Modernisation of Public and Private Hospitals)
- CPER (State-Region Planning Contracts)
- CIADT (Inter-ministerial Committee for Territory Planning)
- FAQSV (Fund for Primary Care Quality Improvement)



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## ENABLING LEGISLATION

Legislation exists in the area of data protection, telemedicine, eHealth service provision and Health-IT product liability, as well as Electronic Health Record. The legislation of 1996, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2007 concerning the Public Health and the Social Security sector is of particular relevance.

The main legal framework for Health Information comprises:

- ① The Commission Nationale Informatique et Libertés (CNIL) law of January 1978, with the European Legislation (24 Oct 1995), which prohibits data processing without consent of the person, except for data absolutely necessary to the health professionals in charge of treating the person concerned, or those related to health service management or required by people exercising under professional secrecy.
- ② The "Ordonnances Juppé" of April 1996 organising the secured electronic infrastructure for the health system, based on authentication of the insured persons and the health professionals as well as the usage of a secured network based on internet standards to exchange electronic information.
- ③ The Medical Privacy Act (4 February 2002) which details the ownership rights of the patient to his or her data, whereby transmission of personal information is authorised only between health professionals treating the same patient, and only with patient's prior consent (article L1110-4).

The legal framework for health ICT standards is the Healthcare Insurance Act of August 2004 (Loi n°2004/810 sur l'Assurance Maladie), Articles 32, 33, 34, 67 related to telemedicine. This law also provides for the creation of the Dossier Médical Personnel (DMP, Personal Medical Record), on behalf of the patient, in order to facilitate the continuity of care. A dedicated structure, the GIP (Public Interest Group) DMP, was created in April 2005 to design, supervise and organise the deployment of the DMP. Furthermore, the Dossier Pharmaceutique (prescription dossier), was created by law in early 2007 in connection with the DMP.

## Implementation: realisation and perspectives

eHealth has been implemented at both local and regional levels. A national eHealth virtual community has also been realised through the national mapping of all eHealth initiatives. Relevant well-known practical eHealth implementations include:

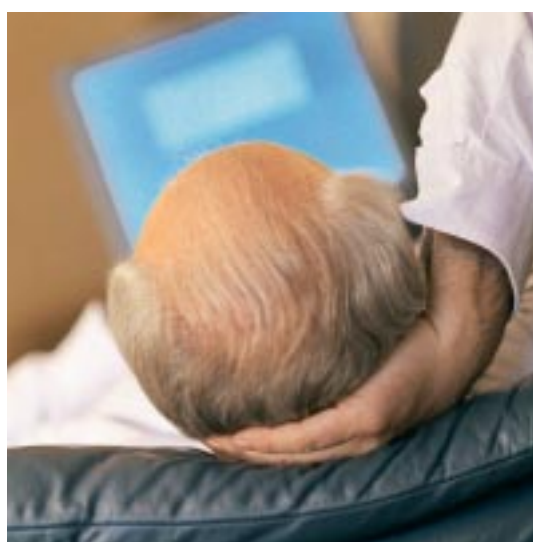
- The CPS (Carte de Professionnel de Santé - Health Professional Card) is a microprocessor card managed by the GIP CPS, a dedicated structure created in 1993, and reinforced on the basis of the Juppé's 1996 law. The CPS functionalities include identification, authentication and electronic signature of health professionals.
- The SESAM-Vitale system uses a microprocessor card (carte Vitale) which contains health insurance data for the insured and their beneficiaries. It replaces paper forms by electronic reimbursement claims (Feuilles de Soins Électroniques, FSE) controlled by the simultaneous usage of the health professional and insured person's cards. In the near future, the Vitale card will be replaced by a new one, the Vitale 2.
- EU NETC@RDS Project, coordinated by SESAM-Vitale Economic Interest Grouping, aims at improving the access of mobile citizens to trans-European health services through a cross-insurance fund (contractual financial) verification of the personal social insurance rights and acceptance of the costs incurred for the healthcare provided.
- The official Health Web Portal in France has been developed under the auspices of the Health General Directorate of the Ministry and aims at promoting information from public agencies working on public health topics. Other important health portals were launched, such as the Plan Cancer, which is the public information website of the national health priority on cancer prevention, as well as dedicated information and recommendations about the quality of the health web sites and services.
- The Mandatory Insurance Organisations are continuing to develop dedicated applications for the



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Healthcare professionals, for example an application which allows medical doctors to securely access information about the previously reimbursed actions or prescribed drugs concerning their patients.

- Several outstanding regional applications and platforms, in the fields of telematics, telehealth, and telemedicine are already in use in different regions, as well as specialised dossiers like the DCC (Dossier Communiquant Cancer). The DMP project (Dossier Médical Personnel - personal medical record), one of the most important aspects of the 2004 law, is now presenting a real opportunity to organise the liaison and the articulation at the national level between the local-regional projects and the national one, by building on accepted "reference practices" for security and interoperability based on international standards, for the benefit of the patient.



## Future activities

Pursuing the development of eHealth initiatives is a major objective of the French government. The eHealth developments envisioned over the next few years include:

- Further development in the use of current eHealth applications, and the emergence of more new applications consistent with the eHealth information system strategic global plan.
- The adoption of validated standards for the implementation of eHealth projects.
- Agreement on the definition of clinical, economic and organisational evaluation criteria.
- The design and implementation of financing schemes and new economic models.
- A better awareness and acceptance of best practices.

The Mission pour l'Informatisation du Système de Santé (MISS), the eHealth department directly linked to the cabinet, was recently asked by the minister to elaborate a global strategic plan on eHealth and health information system. It has already launched a wide consultation with all the concerned stakeholders. Seven working parties have been created.

## Core resources

[http://www.sante.gouv.fr/hm/dossiers/t2a/doc\\_pdf/ehealth\\_france2.pdf#search=%22%22e-health%20in%20France%22%22](http://www.sante.gouv.fr/hm/dossiers/t2a/doc_pdf/ehealth_france2.pdf#search=%22%22e-health%20in%20France%22%22)  
<http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/12/pdf/rap-off/i1686-t1.pdf>  
[http://www.euser-eu.org/eUSER\\_eHealthCountryBrief.asp?CaseID=2220&CaseTitleID=1061&MenuID=118](http://www.euser-eu.org/eUSER_eHealthCountryBrief.asp?CaseID=2220&CaseTitleID=1061&MenuID=118)  
[http://www.legislation.cnaf.fr/textes/loi/TLR-LOI\\_2004810\\_13082004.htm](http://www.legislation.cnaf.fr/textes/loi/TLR-LOI_2004810_13082004.htm)  
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<http://www.d-m-p.org/>  
<http://www.gip-cps.fr/uk/intro/index.html>  
[http://www.sesam-vitale.fr/programme/programme\\_eng.asp](http://www.sesam-vitale.fr/programme/programme_eng.asp)  
<http://www.netcards-project.com/index.php>  
<http://www.sante.fr>  
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## About eHealth ERA

This fact sheet is the outcome of research in the context of the *eHealth ERA* project (Towards the Establishment of a European Research Area). The project is implemented by empirica GmbH (coordinating partner, Germany), STAKES (Finland), CITTRU (Poland), ISC III (Spain), CNR (Italy) and EPSRC (United Kingdom), based on a Coordination Action contract with the European Commission.

The European Commission, Directorate General Information Society and Media, supports this project to contribute towards greater transparency across Member States and other participating countries on eHealth strategies as well as innovation-oriented research and technology development (RTD) initiatives, including the coordination of Member States' eHealth strategy formulation and implementation.

The fact sheet is an excerpt from the report "eHealth priorities and strategies in European countries", published by the European Commission in April 2007. The complete report is available for download at [http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item\\_id=3346](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=3346).

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