

Briefing Note

On the Communication from the Commission on enabling the digital transformation of health and care in the Digital Single Market

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This briefing note is a summary of the [European Commission's Communication on enabling the digital transformation of health and care in the Digital Single Market; empowering citizens and building a healthier society](#), intended to promote the use of **digital innovation in health** and social care by addressing **user's needs** and making it easier to have **equal access** to high quality care.

CONTEXT

The communication argues that the use of digital innovations can help reform health and social systems and their transition to new care models, shifting from hospital-centred to community-based systems that attend to people's needs.

The ageing of the population and the growing burden of chronic conditions are increasing the demand for health and social care. This means health and social care systems have to develop a different approach to enable more effective care adequate to the complexity of the different services. Digital solutions for health and care are still developing slowly and they vary widely across Member States and regions. For this reason, the Commission proposes action at EU level.

KEY POINTS

Proposed future actions

The Commission proposes to set out **further action in three areas**:

1. *Citizens' secure access and sharing of health data across borders;*
2. *Better data for research, disease prevention and personalised health and care;*

3. Digital tools for citizen empowerment and person-centred care.

To deliver integrated services based on people's needs, the communication points out **some crucial transformations**: the need for new care models, the use of technology assessment for attaining greater quality and sustainability of the services, the involvement of multi-disciplinary care teams with new or redesigned roles for care professionals, a workforce of sufficient capacity and with appropriate skills, the active cooperation between care professionals and users, and the use of digital solutions for the delivery of efficient and cost-effective care.

Recognising the complexity of this change, the European Commission asks for collaboration with different actors, namely service providers. The Commission also points out the financial pressure that the health and social systems are under, reiterating the need for financial investment to enable these transformations. The funding should encourage collaboration between Member States and between regions and the Commission takes action to raise awareness of financing opportunities and promote innovative procurement.

NEXT STEPS

This Communication intends to be a starting point in **improving** health and **social care services** using **digital innovations**. The Social Employers are working on digitalisation as one of their three main topics of interest, together with EPSU. There is a clear window for involvement of the Social Employers in the debate, and the opportunity to push for innovation in the sector.

The Communication will also be backed up in the years to come with other proposals, as well as funding opportunities. The proposed Digital Europe programme in the next EU Budget has a 9 billion EUR budget dedicated to digitalisation, including in social services.