



eEurope 2002 Action Plan: Health Online chapter

An Overview of Ongoing Activities in
eHealth

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*e*Europe:

Three key activities

- Accelerating the appropriate legal environment
- Supporting new infrastructure and services
- Open co-ordination and benchmarking





Five Target Actions

- Member States:
 - the implementation of an infrastructure
- Member States and the European Institutions:
 - Best practices in eHealth identified and disseminated
 - Quality criteria for health websites.
 - Data networks will be established to assist with informed healthcare planning in Member States.
 - Communication on legal and Quality aspects of eHealth will be drafted to clarify which existing legislation has an impact on eHealth, and address quality criteria for health related websites



Target Action: A Set of Quality Criteria for Health Related Websites

- On June 7-8, 2001, Directorates General Information Society and Health (INFOS) and Consumer Protection (SANCO) held a workshop in Brussels to discuss « Quality Criteria for Health Related Websites. »
- The workshop gathered experts, Member States representatives and Commission officials.
- Results:
 - draft Guidelines on Quality Criteria for Health Related Websites
 - eHealth website



Objectives of the guidelines:

- To draw up a commonly agreed set of simple criteria which may act a guidelines to basic good conduct in the development and maintenance of health related websites.
- To support MS in implementing quality assurance for health websites



Transparency and Honesty

- Transparency of provider of site - name, physical address and electronic address of the person or organisation responsible for the site.
- Transparency of purpose and objective of the site (including any commercial purposes).
- Target audience clearly defined (further detail on purpose, multiple audience could be defined at different levels).
- Transparency of sources of funding for site (grants, sponsors, advertisers, non-profit, voluntary assistance).



Transparency and Honesty of Health Related Content

- Transparency of the health related objectives of the provider of the information, including the purpose and objective of content provision should be clearly defined and stated.
- Where advice or information on particular conditioned, lifestyles or medications is given funding from producers of products implicitly or explicitly endorsed should be transparent to the site user.





Authority for Health Related Content

- Where a policy of using only accredited medical professionals to generate content is adopted this should be clearly stated and adhered to.
- Where a mixed group of content providers is used (medical professionals, journalists, personal testimony ...) the category of content provider of each item should be clearly identifiable.
- Where scientific evidence is adduced the sources of such evidence should be easily identifiable to the user.





Privacy

- Privacy, security and confidentiality policy and systems to be clearly defined, including required opt-in for the storage of any personal data.





Privacy of Health Related Content

- Where any health related information is gathered from the site user, the requirements of Directive 95/46/EC, in particular article 8, should be carefully assessed and full compliance assured





Accountability

- Accountability - user feedback, and appropriate oversight responsibility (such as a key quality compliance officer for each site).
- Responsible partnering - all efforts should be made to ensure that partnering or linking to other websites is undertaken only with trustworthy individuals and organisations who themselves comply with relevant codes of good practice.
- Editorial policy - clear statement describing what procedure was used for selection of content.



Accountability for health related Content

- Where specific health related user feedback is provided by the site, particular where personalised medical advice is offered, every effort should be made to ensure that such advice is bona fide and that advisors are suitably qualified to offer advice.





Accessibility for Health related Content

- Where a particular type of audience is targeted (eg children) the presentation and content of information should be assessed on the basis of the chosen target audience.



