

European EHR Exchange Format Summit: Building a Unified European Health Data Ecosystem



[The European Electronic Health Record Exchange Format \(EEHRxF\) Summit](#), held in December 2023, brought together key stakeholders to discuss the development, challenges, and future of this crucial initiative. Organised by the XpanDH project, co-organised and hosted by the European Commission the expert summit aimed to connect European projects, initiatives and key stakeholders with an interest in co-constructing the vision for the EEHRxF, its development process and use.

Altogether, over 100 attendees spanning e-health, interoperability, and beyond took part. The event emphasized EEHRxF's role in enabling interoperability, empowering patients, and improving healthcare across Europe.

During the opening session, participants delved into discussions on the European Electronic Health Record Exchange Format, exploring policy insights and their implications for both the industry and users. The dialogue commenced with **Fulvia Raffaelli** from DG SANTE emphasizing the critical importance of collaboration among European Union countries in the context of health data exchange. Reflecting on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became evident that such collaboration is crucial not only in responding to health crises but also in ensuring responsive healthcare systems.

Sara Roda from the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) emphasized the role of European Health Records as a clinical tool. In her insights, she highlighted the importance of efficiency, conciseness, and relevance in utilizing these records. Sara underscored the need for them not to become an open door for mistrust and litigation. Her remarks during the summit shed light on the critical considerations for European Health Records to function effectively in a clinical setting. **Juergen Brandstaetter** from IHE-Europe communicated that the format plays a crucial role in offering a framework to consolidate content through two specifications. Jurgen emphasized the objective of streamlining the documentation and exchange of health data, illustrating the practical benefits of EEHRxF in simplifying and improving these processes.

The summit not only focused on the evolution and co-creation of the EEHRxF format but also strategically incorporated other projects like Gravitare-Health. This inclusion underscores the collaborative spirit in advancing initiatives for patient empowerment and driving transformative changes in the broader health system. The cross-pollination of ideas and insights from diverse projects contributed to a holistic and comprehensive exploration of possibilities within the realm of electronic health records.

The following key messages emerged from the EEHRxF Summit, outlining the path towards a connected European health data ecosystem:

- **EHDS as a driving force:** The European Health Data Space (EHDS) emerged as a major driver for EEHRxF adoption, facilitating its integration within the health data ecosystem.
- **Focus on patients and professionals:** Patient-centricity and engagement of eHealth professionals were highlighted as crucial aspects of successful implementation.
- **Challenges and opportunities:** Plenary sessions addressed specific challenges in domains like patient summaries, prescriptions, lab results, imaging, and discharge reports. Standardization, data quality, and involvement of initiatives like IMPACT-DATA and EUCAIM were emphasized.
- **HL7 FHIR and co-creation:** Discussions explored the transition from HL7 CDA to HL7 FHIR, the importance of semantic assets, and co-creation endeavours to ensure a systematic approach.
- **Collaboration is key:** The roadmap and co-creation aspects require collaboration between the EC, Member States, industry, and the eHealth community. Joint actions and co-creation initiatives were encouraged.
- **Next steps and recommendations:** Final considerations addressed the remaining challenges, including interoperability, data quality, training, co-creation, and alignment with the Digital Wallet.

Overall, the summit highlighted the crucial role of EEHRxF in achieving a unified, patient-centric, and interoperable European health data ecosystem. Collaborative efforts across all stakeholder groups will be essential to navigate the challenges and unlock the full potential of this transformative initiative.