

Swisscom trials electronic patient record system for the first time

This week Swisscom is to mount a large-scale trial of its electronic patient record (EPR) system. More than 70 IT specialists from all over Switzerland and neighbouring countries will meet in Köniz near Bern as part of the EPR projectathon.

The legal basis for the electronic patient record system has been in force since 15 April 2017. It includes the technical requirements necessary for the certification of EPR master communities (see box). As Thomas Bachofner, CEO Swisscom Health remarks: “For some time now, we have been working intensively on systems which will one day ensure EPR system operation in various Swiss cantons.” Swisscom is building one of the country’s largest eHealth platforms for the cantons of Zurich, Bern and Basel.

A LAN party for EPR

A key practical milestone on the path to EPR certification will take place from 25 to 28 September 2017 in Köniz near Bern in the shape of the EPR projectathon: a Swisscom team and around 60 other IT specialists will trial their EPR systems for the first time. In a type of EPR LAN party in Köniz, Swisscom will run the IT infrastructure of a master community, which will let patients open an EPR and perform all the administrative tasks related to record management – including administration of access rights by the patient – in the future.

Switzerland as international pioneer

The EPR system envisages patients granting health personnel access to dedicated personal data and also being able to delete documents in their personal records. This is not possible with the current standards for the exchange of data in the health system. “Our experts have redeveloped several components for the EPR authorisation system in line with Federal Office of Public Health requirements,” says Bachofner. Foreign IT providers are monitoring this pioneering work with interest. The standards being evolved for EPR authorisation may well become international standards in the future.

Projectathon details

www.epd-projectathon.ch

Swisscom and the electronic patient record (EPR)

Digital health data for patients is stored at surgeries, in hospitals and with other service providers in a decentralised system. Using the EPR system, patients can access this data and decide who else can access it. Opening and managing an EPR is enabled by master communities, which include health personnel, the facilities they work for (like associations or hospitals) and in some cases, also cantons. As technology partner, Swisscom is developing various master communities of this nature to provide the IT infrastructure required by the EPR system.

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