



Zurich Health Network provides patients with access to their personal health data

Patients in the Zurich Health Network – a doctors' network comprising 36 connected medical practices – are now able to access selected documents from their own respective medical records. This is made possible by the online health dossier from Swisscom.

While the Swiss government still has to deliberate on the Electronic Patient Records Act (EPDG), innovative service providers in the healthcare sector are already focusing on exchanging data online. In this way, the doctors in the Zurich Health Network are providing patients with the opportunity to access their personal medical data. Dr. Philipp Katumba, initiator of the project and Head of the Zurich Health Network recommend his patients to set up an online patient dossier: "The patient dossier gives back patients a huge amount of freedom and self-determination as regards issues concerning their health. The dossier also makes treatment easier and faster, as patients can have immediate access to all of the relevant medical data, for example, when visiting a specialist, checking into hospital or getting a second opinion". In doing so, the patient controls what happens with the data. In the event that a patient's doctor is absent or the patient decides to change doctors, his medical records will be available regardless, thus guaranteeing that he receives consistent treatment.

Zurich Health Network assuming pioneering role

This service is, to date, unique in Switzerland. If a patient asks for his records, they are normally sent to his house by post, as medical records have yet to be digitalised. This would involve doctors having to spend additional time working on preparing data for the patients, for which they would not be paid. According to Philipp Katumba, however, medical records are just as important nowadays as the actual diagnosis and therapy itself. He is convinced that this is a solution that will work: "The more responsibility that patients assume for themselves, the quicker they are able to become healthy again."



Improving the lines of communication between doctors and patients

Patients are increasingly using the Internet to learn more about symptoms and courses of therapy. Communicating with doctors via modern electronic means, however, remains a challenge. According to Stefano Santinelli, Head of Swisscom Health: "Many patients would appreciate being able to communicate online with their doctor. This is now possible thanks to the Zurich Health Network, as the Swisscom online health dossier provides a secure communication channel for patients." Furthermore, data can also be submitted with valuable additional information such as a patient's living will or vital medical data from sensors or apps.

Press release: Digitisation could reduce healthcare costs by CHF 100 million

<http://www.swisscom.ch/en/about/medien/press-releases/2014/09/20140902-MM-Kosten-Gesundheitswesen.html>

The Zurich Health Network has set itself the goal of further increasing the collaboration between doctors from primary healthcare and specialist doctors. The aim is to provide integrated healthcare in the city of Zurich. As one of the first networks of its kind, the Zurich Health Network includes a number of specialist doctors. Through cooperation and online networking, the Zurich Health Network is creating the best possible processes and avoiding duplication and the unnecessary costs associated with this.

Swisscom provides solutions for the secure exchange of data on the Swiss healthcare market. A central feature is an increase in efficiency and quality through secure data exchange, as well as solutions that promote health-conscious behaviour and facilitate independent living in old age.

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