

# NEWSLETTER



**eHAction**

Joint Action supporting  
the eHealth Network



  [ehaction.eu](http://ehaction.eu)



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Hugo Agius Muscat qualified in medicine and surgery in 1985. He also holds a Master of Science degree in Health Information Science from Warwick University, UK, awarded with distinction in 1990. He is a consultant public health physician with 30 years of experience in Health IT. His current activity in Malta's Ministry for Health includes management of the myHealth service, technical input in national eHealth services and development of cross-border eHealth services. Dr Agius Muscat is also a visiting senior lecturer at the University of Malta.



Vivian Brincat joined the Ministry for Health in Malta in 2004 after working in managerial positions in the national broadcasting services. She holds an Honours Degree in Public Projects Management. Key managerial roles have included the ICT implementation at the new Oncology Centre opened in 2015 and currently implementation of national eHealth services within the Connecting eGovernment programme. She has also been involved in the epSOS project, the PARENT and JAsEHN joint actions, and more recently in deployment of cross-border eHealth services and in eHAction.

# Foreword

by Hugo Agius Muscat  
and Vivian Brincat,  
eHAction QM

"Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives, the cumulative experience of many masters of craftsmanship. Quality also marks the search for an ideal after necessity has been satisfied and mere usefulness achieved."

These words have been attributed to William A. Foster, a United States Marine who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, the highest US military decoration, for heroically shielding a fellow Marine from the force of an exploding grenade during the Second World War. It is more likely, though, that they were written by William T. Foster, an American educator and economist, whose theories were especially influential in the 1920s.

We may not be called upon to perform an extreme act of heroism while working to protect and improve the health of our fellow citizens, but Foster's wise words regarding quality resonate strongly with our daily challenges. eHealth Action is a Joint Action that has brought together many masters of different disciplines from diverse countries, who are all working together, using their skills to craft solutions that address the evolving needs of the health services in our countries.

eHealth and Digital Health offer important opportunities to move beyond what is merely adequate, and to strive steadily towards the ideal of "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being". If together, through eHAction, we make wise choices between the many alternatives and options we are faced with, we will indeed be helping to improve the lives of millions of European citizens. As the eHAction Quality Management team, we are honoured to be able to give our modest contribution to this important joint effort.

Enjoy reading this Newsletter!

Hugo Agius Muscat & Vivian Brincat

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# What is our main goal?

eHAction aim is to contribute to innovative, efficient and sustainable health systems, in cooperation with European countries and stakeholders.

Promote and strengthen the use of information and communication technologies in health development.

eHAction strategy is to develop guidance and tools that can promote political discussion and further alliances in five strategic areas.



# Top Stories

17th April 2019, Brussels

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Steering Council Meeting

The 3rd meeting of the Steering Council took place face-to-face in Brussels on 17th April 2019.

The Steering Council is the entity responsible for dealing with the strategic organisation of the eHAction joint action and focuses on the final preparations for eHealth Network meetings with regards to contents.

On 17th April, several themes were discussed. Highlighted among the topics were the eHAction Project Plan and activities, as well as the preparation and status of documents for the June 2019 eHealth Network meeting , in Bucharest, Romania.

Following the welcome, introduction and WP1 presentation on the eHAction project plan and activities, time was allocated to the European Commission's considerations and the 2019 landscape. After the perspectives from DG SANTE and DG CONNECT, Work Packages 2 (WP2) and 3 (WP3) presented their own strategies. WP2 presented the Deliverable 2.1, focused on the dissemination and stakeholder engagement strategy and its practical document: Stakeholder Involvement; WP3 introduced the evaluation strategy.

After presentations by the management and support Work Packages, the next point on the agenda involved the presentation of deliverables and the discussion on the status of the documents for the eHealth Network meeting of June 2019. This point on the agenda was followed by an analysis of the financial report and a report on the work of the quality management team.

In this 3rd meeting of the Steering Council, there was an evaluation survey prepared by the WP3 team where all the participants could evaluate a few specific aspects of the meeting. The survey is part of the WP3 evaluation strategy and allows the WP to better evaluate and control the follow-up of every meeting and activity in the context of eHAction.

In the afternoon, the next activities of each Work Package, as well as eHAction's next meetings and workshops, were presented for everyone's interest and knowledge.



3<sup>rd</sup> Steering Council Meeting | 17th April 2019 | Brussels



# Work Package 6

## Enhancing Continuity of Care

Healthcare, with its increasing reliance on technology, has a requirement for professional personnel to take advantage of technological innovations that improve patient outcomes, optimise efficiency and generally to bring about a digital transformation of the service, the industry and the future developments and opportunities.

Performance, competence and continuous professional development of the healthcare workforce must be catered for in this context, with digital and professional IT skills taking their place alongside clinical competence.

eHAction Work Package 6 'Enhancing Continuity of Care' is about preparing healthcare systems and providers to adopt and implement interoperable cross-border solutions - a key priority to ensure progress in eHealth.

### Task 6.3: eSkills for Professionals

Task 6.3 aims to support countries through the eHealth Member States Expert Group (eHMSEG) by developing a process to ensure that the eSkills necessary to gain full advantage from the implementation of European eHealth strategies and cross-border healthcare services, identifying current challenges and appropriate actions that can be taken to build the necessary eSkills framework for healthcare professionals.

In Task 6.3 the associated partners will produce an evidence-based report with a supportive roadmap to provide a clear understanding of how common standards or frameworks can be exploited as part of a structured methodology to develop the e-skills necessary to support eHealth in Member States/Countries amongst designated professional groupings in healthcare.

The task is now in the pilot phase: health professionals in five categories: doctors, nurses, midwives, dentists and pharmacists, will self-assess their e-skills competence against the eHealth Competence Model developed during the JAseHN joint action, using a specially adapted online tool of the Irish Computer Society.

Recruitment of health professionals is currently taking place in Ireland, Hungary, Portugal, Serbia and Cyprus. An accompanying survey will also gather qualitative data from the same pilot participants. Based on survey results relevant educational options will be sourced and communicated back to participants.

Further qualitative data will be obtained from relevant experts and stakeholders through interviews and focus groups later in the year before all information is fed into a final report due for submission in May 2020.

# Workshop on Roadmap on Future eHDSI Use Cases and Features

From 27th to 30th November, more than 25 participants from 14 countries attended the eHAction's Work Package 6 Workshop, in order to discuss the proposed "Roadmap on Future eHDSI (eHealth Digital Service Infrastructure) Use Cases and Features", more specifically its methods and content as well as the feedback received so far from the eHealth Network and its stakeholders.

Many European citizens travel to or work in another Member State; however, their clinical information may not always be accessible where the need for healthcare arises. The increased mobility associated with the advancements of the most recent digital technologies requires both health policies and systems across the EU to be more interconnected. Cross-border healthcare services, such as Patient Summary and ePrescription address this need.

There is a need to ensure the standardisation of health data exchange to sustain high quality safe and trusted cross-border healthcare services by the Member States. This is in line with planned recommendations on an Electronic Health Record Exchange Format (EHRXF), that aims to facilitate cross-border interoperability and secure access to electronic health records for seamless exchange and use of health data in the EU.

Against the background of these facts, this four day workshop consisted of three parts with a joint agenda. The first two days were a formal meeting of eHAction's Task 6.1, that took place in

gematik, the German national eHealth competence centre. The third day was a workshop of the CEN/ HL7 project 'International Patient Summary' (IPS). The IPS workshop addressed how the experience from IPS standard development can feed the process of developing a 'Roadmap for eHealth Digital Service Infrastructure (eHDSI) future use cases and features'.

The CEN IPS standard, which codifies in a European standard the functional requirements of the eHealth Network endorsed guidelines, was voted positively by 17 European countries and builds on the close collaboration and agreement with HL7, an international standard developing organisation that recently delivered the HL7 FHIR IPS. The need for education and dissemination material for the new CEN IPS standard was recognised.

On the last day, there was a meeting focused on EU-funded project Trillium II ([www.trillium2.eu](http://www.trillium2.eu)), hosted by HL7 Germany. The project invited members of the eHAction for an exchange of best practices on IPS governance at the global, European, and national level.

This format enabled experts from all groups to join all the available events, to gain insight about the work that has been done so far and to align their work, by giving and receiving insights about innovative work methods and valuable suggestions.

## T6.3 Workshop

Eleven delegates from seven countries participated in the first workshop of Task 6.3 at the Irish Computer Society's offices in Dublin on Wednesday, 16th January 2019. The group had a mix of backgrounds including doctors, academics, health informaticians and more, which ensured interesting and informative conversations. Ireland, as task leader, hosted the workshop, and was keen to use the face-to-face contact to crystallise plans and reach decisions on important aspects of the task.

Central to this, and the focus of Task 6.3, is the e-skills capability of health professionals. Specifically, the task is charged with providing an understanding of how common standards or frameworks can be exploited as part of a structured methodology to develop the e-skills necessary to support eHealth in Member States/ Countries amongst designated professional groups in healthcare. The output of the task is envisaged to be a report including a supportive roadmap outlining an evidence-based approach to equipping health professionals with the e-skills they require.

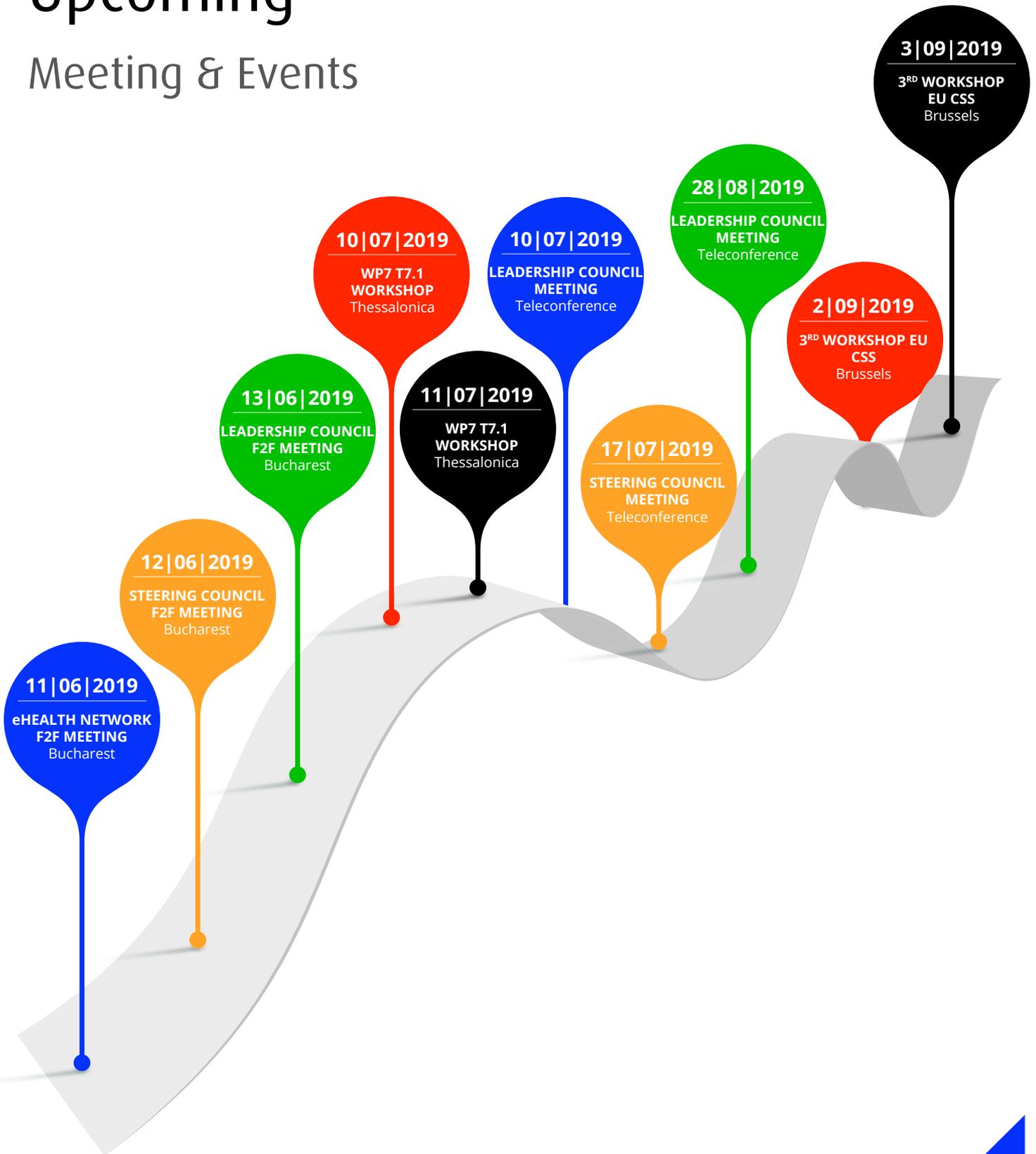
The group reviewed the results of landscaping work completed to date, taking a closer look at existing frameworks and relevant initiatives. In particular, the Health Information Technology Competences (HITCOMP) (<http://hitcomp.org/>) and the JAseHN report "Recommendations on online training tools for health professionals concerning cross-border healthcare services" were examined.

Two international experts from outside the European Union contributed to the meeting. The group viewed a pre-recorded presentation by Tim Shaw, Professor of Digital Health at the University of Sydney on the New South Wales eHealth Capability Framework and Digital Health CRC project, which is underpinned by workforce capability development.

The afternoon session brought all of the themes together to agree on a practical approach to progressing the task. What was notable during the meeting was the genuine interest and enthusiasm of all attendees for the job at hand. In that respect the workshop served to renew energies for the project, giving the 'green light' for the next phase of Task 6.3.



# Upcoming Meeting & Events





On this special edition, we are celebrating  
the first year of eHAction.

We look forward to another great year!

All the best,  
eHAction Consortium

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