

9 countries successfully test cross-border data exchange of patient data

The world's most ambitious program for the cross-border exchange of patient data successfully passed its first major test during Projectathon in Bratislava at the end of November, 2010.

Organized by the large-scale EU program epSOS (European Patients Smart Open Services), the four-day testing marathon gathered 140 engineers for health information systems from nine participating Member States and a consortium of Industry Beneficiaries.

According to the epSOS Coordinator Fredrik Linden, the importance of the Projectathon is that "it is now proven the technology is there to support interoperable patient summaries and ePrescriptions."

"We successfully introduced end-to-end testing for healthcare professionals and contributed to advancing the global interoperability work done by IHE," he said.

As a result of Projectathon, epSOS was able to identify pilot sites for a large-scale pilot program to be launched in early 2011 that will run for 12 months.

Over 30,000 healthcare professionals at 2,149 pharmacies and 1,113 point of care and general practice clinics, as well as 183 hospitals are expected to participate in the pilot.

A second Projectathon is being organized as a parallel testing event to be conducted during the annual IHE European Connectathon April 11 to 15, 2011 in Pisa, Italy.

Linden said he expects this second event to see an expanded participation with more countries and more industry teams.

Member States participating in the first Projectathon in Bratislava were Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Spain, France, Greece, Italy, Sweden and Slovakia.

A consortium made up of engineers from the Fraunhofer Institute in Germany and the Austrian team developing that country's electronic health record Elektronische Gesundheitsakte (ELGA) also participated in the testing event.

As the host nation, Slovakia managed the complex logistics for broadband internet access

for both hard-wire and wireless networks, as well as the hosting of simulators on local servers.

"The organization of the event was excellent contributing to the very positive atmosphere among the participants," said Linden.

A lot of high-quality experience was gained through the ongoing exchange of knowledge and experiences, he said, with a collaborative approach to problem-solving allowing many issues to be fixed during the course of the four-day event.

"Now it is clear which steps need to be taken next regarding the technical and organizational level in order to make the pilot operation successful," he added.

Key to the success of the event was the reuse by epSOS of IHE Profile specifications and the Gazelle Test Management Tool developed by IHE.

Participants registered their systems through Gazelle prior to the Projectathon and used simulators and validation tools for the execution of lab testing. During the Projectathon, the same set of tools and simulators was used to assist testers and monitors in their tasks:

A team of eight Connectathon veterans led by IHE-Europe served as monitors for the Projectathon, assisting engineers in test setups and verifying tests results.

Read the article on the [epSOS Projectathon](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/redirectation.cfm?item_id=6526&utm_campaign=isp&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eHealth&utm_content=23) <LINK:http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/redirectation.cfm?item_id=6526&utm_campaign=isp&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eHealth&utm_content=23> featured on the European Commission eHealth website.