

THE ICT ASPECTS OF MEDICAL TOURISM (AND HEALTH TOURISM)

...DOES HEALTH TOURISM NEED ICT?

Call for Papers

Chair:

Dr. Constantine Constantinides, M.D., Ph.D., Chief Executive, healthCare cybernetics, Greece

Introduction

Health Tourism is a “catch all” collective term for diverse services related to health and involving some travel.

Medical Tourism is one of the 8 Health Tourism Segments, which includes:

- Medical Tourism
- Dental Tourism
- Spa Tourism
- Wellness (and Fitness) Tourism
- Culinary Tourism
- Sports Tourism
- Accessible Tourism
- Assisted Residential Tourism (Ambient Assisted Living – Abroad – see more on this, below).

But how relevant (for Health Tourism) is “ICT in Health” – or simply “eHealth”? For the “Medical Tourism” Segment, eHealth is Essential – and in fact, Vital. Suffice it to say that the failure of universal implementation of eHealth Practices by the healthcare facilities and other organizations (in the EU), is one of the fundamental stumbling blocks standing in the way of “Freedom of Patient Movement”.

There is today, still a considerable “gap” between the “adoption of eHealth” (the Principle) and the “implementation of eHealth” (the Practice). This is true not only in the EU – but world-wide. FP7 (EU) is now funding research into Ambient Assisted Living – closely related to one of the 8 Health Tourism Segments (the second call for proposals has already gone out).

Note: Ambient Assisted Living – AAL - is an article 169 initiative (referring to article 169 of the EC treaty) which allows for new forms of joint R&D activities with shared financial contributions between the European Commission and Member states. AAL is only the 2nd initiative – and the 1st under the current 7th European Research Framework Programme – to operate as such an instrument.

And what aspects of eHealth are we talking about?

- International Classification of Disease – ICD
- CPT - Current Procedural Terminology

- Diagnosis Related Groups – DRGs
- eBilling
- Communication Protocols (HL7)
- Nomenclature (SNOMED)
- Electronic Medical / Health / Consumer Record
- Ambulatory Payment Classifications
- Tele-consultation, Telediagnosis, Tele-follow-up, Tele-assessment
- Portable and Embedded Systems

Objectives of the Session

Bring the relevant knowledge, experience, ideas and proposals – and the involved individuals (in ICT and Health Tourism) - to a forum which can catalyze specific collaborative actions – and very importantly, implementable “industry-relevant” innovations.

The issues we propose raising and discussing at the Conference:

- ✓ The gap between “the state of the art and practice” of eHealth (focusing on its relevance and application to the EU “Freedom of Patient Movement” Directive – and Health Tourism generally)
- ✓ The ICT-related Stumbling Blocks to further development and global expansion of Health Tourism
- ✓ The ICT Aspects of Ambient Assisted Living Abroad
- ✓ eHealth Domain Integration (a concept first introduced and presented by Dr. Constantinides at the 4th International Conference on Information Communication Technologies in Health - 2006)
- ✓ Suitable Speakers (and audience)
- ✓ All those already involved in the ICT aspects of Health / Healthcare and those involved in the various aspects of Health Tourism
- ✓ Students (undergraduate or post-graduate) - wanting to present related / relevant completed work – or work in progress
- ✓ Recommended topics include, but are not limited to, the following:
- ✓ The EU Directive on cross-border health services under Community law (Intra-EU Medical Tourism) – and the ICT-related issues which are standing in the way of its implementation
- ✓ The role and prospects of ICT in Health Tourism
- ✓ The ICT aspects of Ambient Assisted Living – Abroad
- ✓ Career prospects in the ICT Aspects of Health Tourism

Submission Procedure

If you would like to present your work at the Special Session, and have your paper published in the Conference Proceedings, submit a short abstract (200 words) **to icictth@ineag.gr** before **8 May 2009**. Authors will be notified on the acceptance of the abstract by **15 May 2009** and should proceed with submission of the full paper on or before **31 May 2009**.