E-HEALTH SERVICES

Croatia

THE CROATIAN NATIONAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM SETS NEW STANDARDS

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the Republic of Croatia entrusted Ericsson Nikola Tesla with introducing ICT in the National Healthcare System; the project was to be executed on a turn-key basis. Medical services are now provided to Croatian citizens within a cutting-edge Healthcare Networking Information System. The new system is efficient, patient-centered and financially and medically transparent.

The introduction of the new system is essential for further uniform medical services provision across Croatia. The old paper-based system was unfit to handle the waste quantity of patient data because of its inherent slowness in medical records handling and the inefficient communication between different stakeholders.

The Croatian government wanted to offer to its citizens a more sophisticated healthcare service delivery system; Ericsson Nikola Tesla was to coordinate the efforts from all involved, among them the Croatian Institute for Health Insurance and the Croatian National Institute of Public Health. With no existing system to replace or upgrade, Ericsson Nikola Tesla was able to base the design on the latest technologies, equipment and methodologies. To start from nothing also implied a high degree of coordination between the two stakeholders and Ericsson Nikola Tesla and a considerable amount of effort required to formally describe and optimize working practices and processes in healthcare.

ERICSSON ⦀

Ericsson Nikola Tesla was chosen to supply and implement the Primary Healthcare Information System amid the strong competition of companies such as IBM and Microsoft.

Ericsson provided the infrastructure and the platform for eHealth services in Croatia. The services are rated favorably as patient-focused, reducing administrative work and transparent.

Here is what Health Officials in Croatia said about HNIS solution after two years of operation:

"We gained speed and ensured accuracy and control over data, which is crucial for a health insurance organization. The system implemented in Croatia paved the way for a healthcare reform which made it clear that doctors are paid for treatments supplied to patients as opposed to fixed monthly fees based on the number of patients."
Sc.D. Veceslav Bergman, Director of HZZO (Croatian Institute for Health Insurance)

The Health Networking Information System in Croatia was deployed quickly regardless its complexity. Ericsson Nikola Tesla started work in 2004 and completed it in all 20 counties during 2005.

Solution deployment was somewhat delayed by legal and regulatory issues and obstacles to electronic communication, commerce and invoicing.

By spring 2008, a full-scale rollout in all 20 counties in Croatia was completed. All primary healthcare physicians (2300 in number) were connected to the system, together with both major stakeholders, the Croatian Institute for Health Insurance and the Croatian National Institute of Public Health.

System users say they benefited from the system over the last two years:

"With this system we save time to dedicate to other duties; the system enables us to spend more time helping our patients. Electronically stored patient medical data is confidential and accessible to us and the patient upon his request. The information cannot be changed, misused, distorted or deleted."

Dr. Željko Vuk,
primary healthcare

System administrators about their experience with HNIS and the benefits from system utilization over the last two years:

"Instead of the yearly amount of aggregate data that did not allow us to keep track of individual patients, yet outlined population health trends, now we have updated, accurate and timely information.

All system users can use the data analysis functionality. This is important not only for medical professionals but also for decision-makers within the healthcare system; the data analysis function enables them to see problems and priorities relating to the population health in Croatia. Thus decision-makers can efficiently use all healthcare resources: human, technical and financial."

Dr. Marina Kuzman,
Head of Unit
*IS/IT workgroup coordinator at **HZJZ** (Croatian National Institute of Public Health)*

Highlights

Customer
Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the Republic of Croatia

Customer Requirement
To introduce eServices in Primary Healthcare in order to facilitate healthcare services provision in the country

Ericsson Solution
Turn-key solution: equipment and services for the Health Networking Information System

Benefits to Customer
- Patient-centered healthcare solution
- Prevention is better than cure
- Access to comprehensive up-to-date patient data
- Reduced administrative work
- Continuous performance monitoring and reporting
- Improved financial planning