HITCH Partners

The European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) is an independent, non-profit organisation from France, whose mission is to produce telecommunications standards.

EuroRec, a not for profit organisation from Belgium, is the leader of Quality Labelling and Certification of Electronic Health Record systems in Europe.

IHE Europe (Belgium) is part of IHE International being a worldwide initiative by healthcare professionals and industry to improve the way computer systems in healthcare share in-formation.

INRIA, the French national institute for research in computer science and control, is a public institute dedicated to research in information and communication science and technology (ICST).

MedCom is a co-operative venture between authorities, organizations and private firms linked to the Danish healthcare sector and contributes to the development, testing, dissemination and quality assurance of electronic communication and information.

OFFIS is a non-profit research and development institute in Germany and amongst others addresses research topics related to the use of information technology in health-care including eHealth interoperability.

HITCH

## Healthcare Interoperability Testing and Conformance Harmonisation

Defining the Road to eHealth Interoperability

What is HITCH?

Interoperability between the many IT based systems that need to communicate to efficiently and effectively support the provision of health is one key challenge of the eHealth sector. To ensure interoperability, systems need to be tested and verified against established standards and profiles (conformance testing) and also against each other (interoperability testing).

Successful testing is expressed by means of certification and quality labelling and has to based on a robust and well-defined approach based on standards and profiles as well as appropriate support tools. At the moment, the testing tools available for this purpose are far from being complete.

HITCH is a project funded by the European Commission with the mission of defining a roadmap for establishing a comprehensive foundation for interoperability conformance testing in the field of healthcare in Europe. The roadmap will be available by mid 2011.
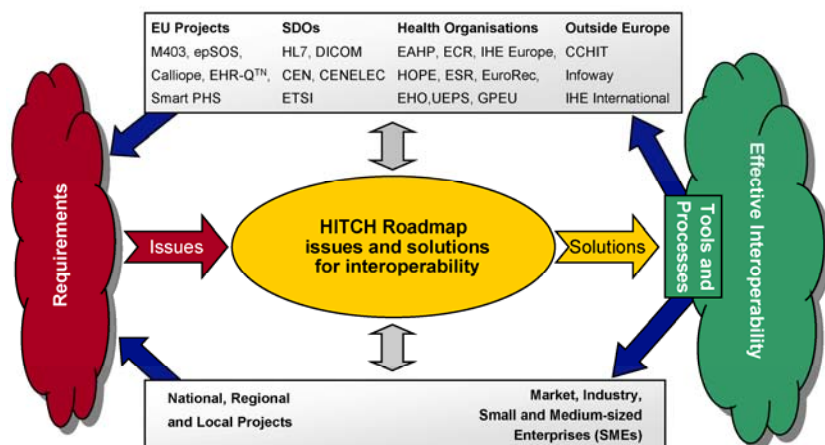
The HITCH roadmap will assure that real-world requirements and projects, standardization bodies, testing tools and other influences and stakeholders are taken into account in order to bridge the gap towards the establishment a comprehensive quality management system in the area of eHealth interoperability.

What is the HITCH Outcome?

Interoperability Testing Quality Management System (QMS)
- Define the required processes, policies and stakeholders (e. g. vendors, healthcare authorities, users, project managers).
- Analyze how an eHealth interoperability QMS can be organized on a European level, i. e. to propose which institutions, responsibilities and policies could be established in order to reach this goal

Survey and Analysis of Available Testing Tools
- Develop a map of existing eHealth testing tools for interoperability and conformance testing.
- Find and apply criteria for an evaluation of these tools and provide a comprehensive overview.
- Offer a high-level executive summary of the current test tool landscape as well as detailed low-level information for eHealth QMS designers and eHealth software developers.

Determination of Future Tools and Tool Roadmap
- Based on the QMS requirements, analyze required tools.
- Present a roadmap how to bridge the gap between the current tool landscape and tools actually needed for a QMS.

Quality Labelling Strategy for Tested eHealth Products
- Propose a quality labelling strategy for eHealth interoperability.
- Discuss existing and potential future labelling approaches.
- Define a seamless link between functional and interoperability-based criteria
- Present recommendations on implementing interoperability labelling in Europe

HITCH defines the road to eHealth Interoperability!