POLICY MAPPING ON EHEALTH POLICIES AND INITIATIVES (INCLUDING ON CANCER CARE) IN CZECH REPUBLIC

This Country Factsheet was prepared for the eCAN Joint Action. It is prefilled with publicly available information and was sent for validation to country experts on eHealth and cancer care. The Country Factsheet serves as the basis for the preparation of an overview of eCAN relevant policies and initiatives in all EU and EEA countries.

eCAN is a Joint Action (JA) of 16 partners in EU-Member States on 'Strengthening eHealth including telemedicine and remote monitoring for health care systems for cancer prevention and care'. eCAN aims to bring the benefits of eHealth to all citizens and patients across EU-Member States (MS) focusing on cancer prevention and care. There is a need to harmonize telemedicine regulations and to explore the efficacy of teleconsultation programs and telemonitoring in the cancer field.

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The country factsheet includes chapters on:

1 definition

2 governance

3 strategies/policies

4 legislation

5 cancer specific eHealth solutions

Any questions? – Please get in touch via ecan@goeg.at.

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1 DEFINITIONS

Table 1 : Deviations in the use of international definitions for eHealth terms – Czech Republic

Term	Definition	Deviation
eHealth	The WHO defines eHealth as « the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for health ». It also says that « eHealth is the transfer of health resources and healthcare by electronic means. »[1]	Yes, significantly.[2] However, the National eHealth Strategy of the Czech Republic and many other documents use term eHealth essentially in line with the WHO definition.
mHealth	« Mobile health (mHealth) is defined by the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Observatory for eHealth as « medical and public health practice supported by mobile devices, such as mobile phones, patient monitoring devices, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and other wireless devices ».[3]	No definition is codified; various characteristics, descriptions and working definitions are used in practice, some of them are close to the WHO definition.[4]
dHealth	The EU defines digital health (dHealth) and care as referring to « tools and services that use information and communication technologies (ICTs) to improve prevention, diagnosis, treatment, monitoring and management of health-related issues and to monitor and manage lifestyle-habits that impact health ». [5] The WHO defines digital health as « the field of knowledge and practice associated with the development and use of digital technologies to improve health. Digital health expands the concept of eHealth to include digital consumers, with a wider range of smart-devices and connected equipment. It also encompasses other uses of digital technologies for health such as the Internet of things, artificial intelligence, big data and robotics. »[6]	No definition is codified.
telehealth	The WHO defines telehealth broader than telemedicine « as it includes computer-assisted telecommunications to support management, surveillance, literature and access to medical knowledge. »[7]	No definition is codified.

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[1] 6. eHealth, Factsheet for European Parliament (who.int)

[2] Act No. 325/2021 Coll. about electronization of healthcare

[3] World Health Organization *Frequently asked questions on Global Task Force on digital health for TB and its work.* [2017-02-27]. http://www.who.int/tb/areas-of-work/digital-health/faq/en/ *webcite*. In mHealth Assessment: Conceptualization of a Global Framework - PMC (nih.gov)

[4] https://wiki.knihovna.cz/index.php/MHealth and Presentation on eHealth and mHealth of Charles University in Prague (in Czech language)

[5] Events - Smart4Health

[6] Digital health EURO (who.int)

[7] Telehealth – DigitalHealthEurope

Term	Definition	Deviation
telemedicine	The EU Commission defines telemedicine as follows (EU Commission definition, COM(2008)689) : « Telemedicine is the provision of health care services, through the use of ICT, in situations where the health professional and the patient (or two health professionals) are not in the same location. It involves the secure transmission of medical data and information, through text, sound, images or other forms needed for the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of patients. »[8]	No definition is codified. New draft amendment to the law No. 372/211 Coll. about healthcare services of July 2023 uses a kind of implicit definition with different scope. Various working definitions are used in practice. Some of them have very similar meaning to the EC definition[9].
teleconsultation	PAHO describes teleconsultation (also sometimes referred to as remote consultation or telehealth), as « interactions that happen between a clinician and a patient for the purpose of providing diagnostic or therapeutic advice through electronic means. »[10]	No definition is codified. New draft amendment to the law No. 372/211 Coll. about healthcare services of July 2023 covers implicitly a service with somewhat different scope.
health app	Essén et al. 2022 define health apps as « a computer program or software application (designed to run on a mobile device) "intended to be used specifically for managing, maintaining, or improving the health of individual persons, or the delivery of care" (ISO https://www.iso.org/standard/78182.html (2021), p 5). »	No definition is codified.

2 GOVERNANCE

Table 2 : Overview on eHealth governance – Czech Republic

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Is there a Ministry or State Secretariat explicitly in charge of eHealth/dHealth? If so, which Ministry ?	Yes	The Ministry of Health is responsible for the topic of eHealth.[11]
Does the Ministry who is in charge of health care also have a specific Department or Unit in charge of eHealth/dHealth?	Yes	There is a National eHealth Centre in Department of IT and Electronic Health Care (ICT) of the Ministry of Health.[12]
Is there a national eHealth governance board?	Yes	In 2021, the National Board for Electronic Health was established and began its activities as an advisory body to the Ministry of Health. [13]

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[8] Telemedicine – DigitalHealthEurope
[9] https://ntmc.fnol.cz/uvod-do-telemediciny
[10] https://www3.paho.org/ish/images/docs/covid-19-teleconsultations-en.pdf?ua=1
[11] Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic
[12] Department of IT and Electronic Health Care (ICT); https://ncez.mzcr.cz/en/node
[13] National Board for Electronic Health; https://ppo.mzcr.cz/workGroup/166

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Is there a public eHealth agency such as ELGA GmbH in Austria or ANS in France? At which level (national, regional)? Which functions does this agency cover?	Yes	The National eHealth Centre of the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic (MoH CZ) acts as national public eHealth agency. No equivalent of ELGA GmbH has been established. Certain operational tasks are performed by the National eHealth Center, Institute of Health Information and Statistics of the Czech Republic (IHIS CR).[14]
Are dHealth / eHealth tools in the outpatient sector publicly paid or covered in your benefits package (e.g. by sickness fund or national health service). If yes, please describe how.	Partly	eHealth tools intended for storing, intermediating, importing, exporting, converting, editing, or viewing health data are typically acquired by healthcare providers as investments. Other tools are systematically not paid, but there are exceptions for specific medical devices with remote monitoring features paid from insurance fund. The payment from insurance fund, if any, relates mostly to actions performed by the healthcare professional. Work on the draft framework for payments for relevant instruments and services is due to start in 2023.
Are dHealth / eHealth tools in the inpatient sector automatically covered in your benefits package or do you need to pay extra (e.g. for telehealth consultations or telereha) compared to standard treatments?	Partly	Telehealth consultations should be covered by healthcare fund. However, the conditions for many cases of services incl. consultations are still not clear, which results in various experimentation and not yet endorsed models that may also include payments for certain parts of the services.
Are there any comprehensive cancer centres focussing on ehealth or telehealth treatments? If yes, which ones and for which specific fields?	Yes	Some oncology centres use teleconsultations in selected cases. No systematic approach has been defined yet.

3 STRATEGIES/POLICIES

Table 3 : Overview on strategies and policies for eHealth and cancer care – Czech Republic

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Is there a national eHealth strategy?	Yes	There is a national eHealth Strategy in place as well as an Action plan (2016-2020) for its implementation[15]. These documents are still valid and in use in 2024, although they could not cover new developments in eHealth and digital health that would require updating or developing additional concept and action documents. The development of a new strategy is under consideration in 2024.
If yes, which stakeholder groups have been included in drafting the national eHealth strategy?	Yes	The Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic prepared the strategy. National eHealth strategy was consulted with relevant stakeholders. Further conceptual and strategic proposals are reviewed also by National Board for Electronic Health, established in October 2021.

[14] National eHealth Centre, Institute of Health Information and Statistics of the Czech Republic (IHIS CR)
[15] National eHealth Strategy of the Czech Republic and Action Plan for the National eHealth Strategy 2016-2020

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Are there regional eHealth strategies? If so, can you indicate whether in all regions or only some? Can you provide some (examplary) documents ?	No	However, Olomouc Region elaborated within the concept of Smart cites a strategic document and subsequent projects, which include eHealth.
If yes, which stakeholder groups have been included in drafting such regional strategy/ies?	No	As to Olomouc Region, several stakeholders incl. major regional healthcare provider and its Nation eHealth Center were included.
Are there strategy/ies explicitly referring to / including eHealth cancer care?	No	In general terms only, telemedicine interventions are developed and verified for certain kinds of oncology patients as well.
If not, are there discussions ongoing to develop a national eHealth strategy?	Yes	The need of digital health strategy was recognized by MoH CZ in 2024.
Is there a National Cancer Plan? And does it refer to eHealth?	Yes	The Czech National Cancer Control Plan 2030 (NOPL CR 2030) sets goals for the prevention and, in particular, for improving the quality of life of cancer patients. The importance of these areas is growing together with the ageing of the population and the increase in the number of cancer patients in the population. The document was updated in 2024 and refers to the national eHealth strategy[16]
In the light of the EU „Beating Cancer Plan" – are there any recent plans to update or modify existing plans? If yes, what is the timeline?	Yes	The NOPL CR 2030 (see above) is in line with Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, which the EC presented on 3.2.2021. This plan places a strong emphasis on the development and sustainability of Sustainable Cancer Prevention, Improving Early Detection, High Standards in Care, Reducing Inequalities and access to cancer care, methodologically led by the National Comprehensive Cancer Centres, effective transfer of knowledge and innovation into clinical practice, especially in the field of Precision and Personalised Medicine and, last but not least, Quality of Life for Patients, Survivors and Carers.[17]
Are there any indicators in eHealth policy or national programmes on cancer care measuring the progress of the use of eHealth in cancer care?	No	No further information available.
Are there any other cancer care specific eHealth initiatives, e.g., by other stakeholders than policy makers / public authorities?	Yes	The project database for the implementation of screening programs serves to build a unified and coordinated infrastructure for the collection and evaluation of data from ongoing and newly introduced screening programs in the Czech Republic.[18]

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[16] Czech National Cancer Control Plan 2030 (NOPL CR 2030)
[17] Czech National Cancer Control Plan 2030 (NOPL CR 2030)
[18] Database for the implementation of screening programs (in Czech language)

4 LEGISLATION

Table 4 : Overview on eHealth and cancer legislation – Czech Republic

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
How would you evaluate the current state of legislation of eHealth in your country in general?	Yes	The relevant legislative framework lags behind progress and needs in this area.
Is there legislation on how to use telemedicine in general?	No, but in preparation	Currently, there is no specific law regulating the telemedicine in the Czech Republic and it is regulated only by rather general rules. Primarily, it is Act No. 372/2011 Coll., on Provision of Health Services (the "**Act**") and Decree No.: 98/2012 Coll., on Health Documentation (the "**Decree**" and Act No. 325/2021 Coll., on the Electronization of Healthcare). New draft amendment to the law No. 372/211 Coll. about healthcare services of July 2023 creates a basic framework for telemedicine but does not detail all the provisions on how to use it.
Is there legislation explicitly referring to cancer prevention?	No	No further information available.
Is there legislation explicitly referring to / including eHealth cancer care?	No	No further information available.
If yes, which of these legislation(s) do you consider most important in the context of eHealth and cancer care? And why?	N/A	No further information available.
If no, are there any particular reasons or barriers to the fact that there is no or only limited cancer specific eHealth legislation (i.e., discussions still ongoing, conflicting opinions or other).	Yes	A new decree that should follow the novel of the Act No. 372/2011 Coll. is planned to be elaborated soon and it should cover more details about telemedicine. In general, it could be noted that legislative framework pertinent eHealth develops only slowly and starts with basis provisions. Further work on the legislation are expected, induced by EU legislation initiatives, technological and medical progress, experience and the needs in the field.
What could be improved or would need to be done to improve these legislations for eHealth in cancer care in your country?	Yes	The need for specific legislative measures related to eHealth cancer care need to be reviewed and justified.

5 CANCER SPECIFIC EHEALTH SOLUTIONS

Table 5 : Overview on cancer specific eHealth solutions in use – Czech Republic

	Login Websites	Apps	Webinars	Multi-disciplinary teleconferences (HCP-HPC)	Teleconsultation (HCP-patient)	Telemonitoring via devices	Other, please specify
Ecosystem	Yes, several e.g., websites of the General Health Insurance Company of the Czech Republic[19], the Health Insurance Company of the Ministry of Interior[20] or the OZP Vita Karta[21], which all provide access to certain Health Data Records; the National Cancer Register[22], the citizen's portal (eGovernment), hospital portals, patients portal of Krajská zdravotní a.s. in Region Ústí and Labem	Yes, individual experiments, projects and studies with patients focusing e.g. on post-operative care, drug reminders, general or modified communication applications developed for use in healthcare.	No	Yes, individual initiatives of HCPs	Yes, simple teleconsultations or enriched by other features (e.g., University Hospital Olomouc) providing remote psychological support and care for paediatric and adult palliative patients, incl. oncologic patients[23].	No	Yes, e.g., National Health Information Portal[24] providing general information about health; website of the Cancer Research Foundation CR[25] in support of science, research and development of serious civilization diseases
Prevention of Cancer	-	-	-	-	-	-	Yes, e.g., National Screening Centre[26], a data portal on screening programs.

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[19] https://en.vzp.cz/

[20] https://eforms.zpmvcr.cz/eforms/ekomunikace?cmp=38FAFF

[21] https://www.ozp.cz/vtk/#/

[22] https://www.uzis.cz/index-en.php?pg=nhis--national-health-registers

[23] https://ntmc.fnol.cz/aktualni-narodni-projekty

[24] https://www.nzip.cz/

[25] https://www.vyzkumrakoviny.cz/lets-combat-cancer-together/

[26] https://nsc.uzis.cz/index.php

	Login Websites	Apps	Webinars	Multi-disciplinary teleconferences (HCP-HPC)	Teleconsultation (HCP-patient)	Telemonitoring via devices	Other, please specify
Treatment of Cancer	-	Yes, see Ecosystem	-	-	Yes, see Ecosystem; Video calls with a doctor/nurse/clinical pharmacist/psychologist/social worker. Moreover, connected patients may request medicines and specific aids. For the aids, University Hospital Olomouc creates own database with automatic creation of requests for easier administration and communication with pharmacies and insurance companies.	-	Yes, e.g., Czech National Cancer Control Programme (information portal on cancer health care)
'Living with cancer'	-	Yes, see Ecosystem	-	-	Yes, see Ecosystem	-	-
Rehabilitation from Cancer	-	Yes, see Ecosystem	-	-	Yes, see Ecosystem	-	-
Palliative Cancer Care	-	Yes, see Ecosystem	-	-	Yes, see Ecosystem; video calls with a doctor/nurse/clinical pharmacist/psychologist/social worker	-	-

Table 6 : Number of eHealth solutions available and in use – Czech Republic

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
How many eHealth solutions (in the sense of medical devices and thus 'authority approved/certified') solutions are existing currently in your country in the context of cancer care/treatment?	N/A	No further information available.
Is there a website or other information on solutions that are recommended to the public for use (e.g. a selection of health apps that are recommended to cancer patients or in general)?	N/A	No further information available.
Can you give an estimation on how the split between private and public apps are available? Give an estimate percentage of public solutions.	No	Note: Interpretation of this question may heavily depend on the healthcare system in a given country.
How can providers and patients assess if the apps are reliable? Is there a certification or quality approval procedure in place? If yes, which kind of procedure?	N/A	No further information available.
How many Health Care Providers use such solutions? Which sector uses rather which types of solutions?	N/A	No further information available.

Remark: The questionnaire omits questions related to ethical principles of digital health services.