

POLICY MAPPING ON EHEALTH POLICIES AND INITIATIVES (INCLUDING ON CANCER CARE) IN **HUNGARY**

This Country Factsheet was prepared for the eCAN Joint Action. It is prefilled with publicly available information and was sent for review 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 - Hungary

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	No deviation from definition. ²
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 deviation from definition found, but also no definition in official HU documents of this term. 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 deviation from definition found, but also no definition in official HU documents of this term. ⁷ Term is not frequently used.
telehealth	The WHO defines telehealth broader than telemedicine « as it includes computer-assisted telecommunications to support management, surveillance, literature and access to medical knowledge. » ⁸	No deviation from definition found, but also no definition in official HU documents of this term. ⁹
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	No deviation from definition. Definition of State Health Care Center (Állami EgészségügyiEllátó Központ – a former entity that was

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

² <https://e-egeszsegugy.gov.hu/web/eeszt-information-portal>

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://www.digitalhungary.hu/e-volution/Mobil-Health-MHealth-a-jovo-egeszsegugye-Oke-de-mi-is-az-az-mHealth/905/> (in Hungarian language)

⁵ *Events - Smart4Health*

⁶ *Digital health EURO (who.int)*

⁷ <https://www.digitalhungary.hu/e-volution/Mobil-Health-MHealth-a-jovo-egeszsegugye-Oke-de-mi-is-az-az-mHealth/905/> (in Hungarian language)

⁸ *Telehealth – DigitalHealthEurope*

⁹ <https://www.digitalhungary.hu/e-volution/Mobil-Health-MHealth-a-jovo-egeszsegugye-Oke-de-mi-is-az-az-mHealth/905/> (in Hungarian language)

Term	Definition	Deviation
	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. » ¹⁰	dissolved and replaced by the National Directorate General for Hospital in 2020) available. ¹¹
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. » ¹²	No deviation from definition. ¹³
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 deviation from definition. Act CLIV of 1997 on Healthcare on the Processing and Protection of Medical and Other Related Personal Data (Healthcare Act) defines the term. ¹⁴

2 GOVERNANCE

Table 2 : Overview on eHealth governance - Hungary

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 Interior is responsible for eHealth and oversees the eHealth Service and Development Center (ESZFK), a non-profit organization pursuant to Decree 1/2022 (V. 26.) ¹⁵
Does the Ministry who oversees health care also have a specific Department or Unit in charge of eHealth/dHealth ?	Yes	Ministerial A Commissioner for tasks related to e-health coordination pursuant to Regulation 25/2019. (VI. 28.) ¹⁶ is in place at the Ministry.
Is there a national eHealth governance board?	Yes	An eHealth Working Group serves this role in the Ministry of Interior.
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 eHealth Service and Development Center (Egészséginformatikai Szolgáltató és Fejlesztési Központ Nonprofit Kft. ESZFK) is the national public eHealth agency for Hungary. ESZFK was founded on 1. February 2022 and is a non-profit organization that deals with the development and application operation of centralized health IT systems, as well as the performance of customer service tasks for these systems at national level. It is the provider and operator of National eHealth Infrastructure (Elektronikus Egészségügyi Szolgáltatási Tér - EESZT). ¹⁷

¹⁰ Telemedicine – DigitalHealthEurope

¹¹ <https://fogalomtar.aeek.hu/index.php/Telemedicina> (in Hungarian language)

¹² <https://www3.paho.org/ish/images/docs/covid-19-teleconsultations-en.pdf?ua=1>

¹³ <https://www.digitalthungary.hu/e-volution/Mobil-Health-MHealth-a-jovo-egeszsegugye-Oke-de-mi-is-az-az-mHealth/905/> (in Hungarian language)

¹⁴ <https://cms.law/en/int/expert-guides/cms-expert-guide-to-digital-health-apps-and-telemedicine/hungary>

¹⁵ 1/2022. (V. 26.)

¹⁶ Regulation 25/2019. (VI. 28.)

¹⁷ <https://www.eszfk.hu/>

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
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.	Yes	Decree 9/2012. (II. 28.) on the definition of outpatient care activities to be financed by the Health Insurance Fund specifies the procedures the reimbursement of which can also be accounted for in the context of telemedicine care. ¹⁸
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?	Yes	For patients with a TAJ (Társadalombiztosítási Azonosító Jel - social security insurance number) card, costs of treatment are fully covered, including eHealth consultations, when applicable.
Are there any comprehensive cancer centres focussing on eHealth or telehealth treatments? If yes, which ones and for which specific fields?	Yes	The National Institute of Oncology (NIO) is the only comprehensive cancer center in Hungary accredited by the OEIC (Organization of European Cancer Institutes). Onco-psychology services are conducted online on a regular basis. The MDT (Multidisciplinary Team) consultations with experts in other hospitals are also conducted online in some cases.

3 STRATEGIES/POLICIES

Table 3 : Overview on strategies and policies for eHealth and cancer care - Hungary

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Is there a national eHealth strategy?	Yes	As National Health Informatics Strategy, National Health Informatics Board, National Health Informatics Forum - BM Instruction 11/2020 (VII.10.). Additionally, a general health strategy in place, the 'Healthy Hungary 2021-2027 - Health Sector Strategy', referring to health digitalization and eHealth objectives. ¹⁹
If yes, which stakeholder groups have been included in drafting the national eHealth strategy?	Several	Public services, IT vendors, medical experts, patient organisations.
Are there regional eHealth strategies? If so, can you indicate whether in all regions or only some? Can you provide some (exemplary) documents ?	No	Only a national strategy has been developed.
If yes, which stakeholder groups have been included in drafting such regional strategy/ies?	N/A	No further information available.
Are there strategy/ies explicitly referring to / including eHealth cancer care?	Yes	There is a separate chapter in the National Health Informatics Strategy on developments related to oncology care.
If not, are there discussions ongoing to develop a national eHealth strategy?	N/A	No further information available.
Is there a National Cancer Plan? And does it refer to eHealth?	Yes	The Hungarian National Cancer Control Programme was first developed in 1993, then it was most recently updated in 2018 ('Magyar Nemzeti Rákellenes Program 2018-2030 (MNREP)'). ²⁰

¹⁸ Decree 9/2012. (II. 28.)

¹⁹ http://medicalonline.hu/informatika/cikk/hamarosan_elkeszul_magyarorszag_e_health_strategiaja and [Egészséges Magyarország](http://www.eh.gov.hu/egeszseg-magyarorszag)

²⁰ http://medicalonline.hu/gyogvitasi/cikk/onkologiai_prehabilitacios_program_indult# and <https://www.bazmkorhaz.hu/hirek/onkologiai-prehabilitacios-program-2022> (in Hungarian language)

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
		The National Institute of Oncology (NIO) has developed as well as oversees the Hungarian National Cancer Control Program. ²¹
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?	N/A	No further information available.
Are there any indicators in eHealth policy or national programmes on cancer care measuring the progress of the use of eHealth in cancer care?	Yes	No further information available.
Are there any other cancer care specific eHealth initiatives, f.e. by other stakeholders than policy makers / public authorities?	Yes	Different cancer databases (of Hungarian Central Statistical Office, National Institute of Health Insurance Fund Management and National Cancer Registry) can be linked at the patient level, which presents an exceptional opportunity to extract cancer care quality indicators. The obstacle has been a lack of financial and human resources. However, in recent years, a specific budget has been allocated for the first time for the provision of necessary resources to harness this opportunity. ²²

4 LEGISLATION

Table 4 : Overview on eHealth and cancer legislation - Hungary

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
How would you evaluate the current state of legislation of eHealth in your country in general?	Inconsistent. EU-conform in technical interoperability, however, incomplete on higher levels of it, i.e. semantic, organisational and legal interoperability.	
Is there legislation on how to use telemedicine in general?	Yes	<p>There is legislation on eHealth and telemedicine in Hungary including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decree 60/2003. (X. 20.) of the Minister of Health, Social and Family Affairs details on the minimum professional conditions required for the provision of healthcare services (“Decree”).²³ Decree 9/2012. (II. 28.) of the Ministry of National Resources on the definition of outpatient care activities to be financed by the Health Insurance Fund, the accountability conditions and rules applicable to their use, and the accounting for performance (“Financing Decree”).²⁴ There is Law Act XLVII of 1997 on the processing and protection of health care and related personal data (Health Data Act).²⁵

²¹ <https://onkol.hu/betegeknek/?lang=en>

²² OECD EU Country Cancer Profile 2023

²³ Decree 60/2003. (X. 20.)

²⁴ Decree 9/2012. (II. 28.)

²⁵ Act XLVII of 1997 on the processing and protection of health care and related personal data

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is Decree No 39/2016 (XII. 21.) of the Minister of Human Resources on detailed rules relating to the National eHealth Infrastructure (EESZT Decree).²⁶ <p>There is further legislation planned / under development.</p>
Is there legislation explicitly referring to cancer prevention?	N/A	No further information available.
Is there legislation explicitly referring to / including eHealth cancer care?	Yes	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 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).	N/A	No further information available.
What could be improved or would need to be done to improve these legislation for eHealth in cancer care in your country?	N/A	No further information available.

²⁶ [Decree No 39/2016 \(XII. 21.\) of the Minister of Human Resources on detailed rules relating to the National eHealth Infrastructure](#)

5 CANCER SPECIFIC eHEALTH SOLUTIONS

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

Area of application/ type of solutions	Login Websites	Apps	Webinars	Multi-disciplinary teleconferences (HCP-HPC)	Teleconsultation (HCP-patient)	Telemonitoring via devices	Other, please specify
Ecosystem	Yes, e.g., EESZT Information portal (personal health data/ePrescription/eProfile/ COVID vaccination appointment booking/EU DCC, Event Catalogue – online patient pathway tracking/Patient Health Documentation/Medical Referral/eMedical history, ePrescription, Digital Image Forwarding module for Health Professionals); Hungarian Cancer Registry (Population Based Cancer Registry located at and managed by the National Institute of Oncology)	Yes, e.g., EESZT alkalmazás (EU DCC mobile application)	-	-	-	-	Yes, e.g., Hungary – Western Hungarian Digital Health Ecosystem (Holistic, interdisciplinary programme to assist transformation of dominantly automotive driven industry towards health industrial diversification. Additionally, stakeholders of the ecosystem seek applications and services for social challenges, with digitalized applications and services.)
Prevention of Cancer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Treatment of Cancer	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
'Living with cancer'	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rehabilitation from Cancer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Palliative Cancer Care	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-

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

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)?	Yes	In Hungary, there are public or commercial websites (such as daganatok.hu and hospice.hu) or other resources that are recommended to cancer patients or the general population.
Can you give an estimation on how the split between private and public apps are available? Give an estimate percentage of public solutions.	N/A	No further information available.
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?	Planned/under development	Information on certifications or quality accreditations to assess the reliability of digital tools is not available.
How many Health Care Providers use such solutions? Which sector uses rather which types of solutions?	N/A	No further information available.