

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

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.

This country factsheet has been **pre-filled** with publicly available information and **validated** by

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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](mailto:ecan@goeg.at).

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## 1 DEFINITIONS

Table 1 : Deviations in the use of international definitions for eHealth terms - Norway

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. » <sup>1</sup>	No deviation from 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 ». <sup>2</sup>	No deviation from definition.
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 ». <sup>3</sup> 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. » <sup>4</sup>	No deviation from definition.
telehealth	The WHO defines telehealth broader than telemedicine « as it includes computer-assisted telecommunications to support management, surveillance, literature and access to medical knowledge. » <sup>5</sup>	No deviation from definition.
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. » <sup>6</sup>	No deviation from definition.
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. » <sup>7</sup>	No deviation from definition.

<sup>1</sup> [6. eHealth, Factsheet for European Parliament \(who.int\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> 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)*

<sup>3</sup> [Events - Smart4Health](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Digital health EURO \(who.int\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Telehealth – DigitalHealthEurope](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Telemedicine – DigitalHealthEurope](#)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www3.paho.org/ish/images/docs/covid-19-teleconsultations-en.pdf?ua=1>

Term	Definition	Deviation
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 <a href="https://www.iso.org/standard/78182.html">https://www.iso.org/standard/78182.html</a> (2021), p 5). »	No deviation from definition.

## 2 GOVERNANCE

Table 2 : Overview on eHealth governance - Norway

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Is there a Ministry or State Secretariat explicitly in charge of eHealth/dHealth? If so, which Ministry ?	Yes	The Norwegian Directorate of Health is responsible for eHealth in Norway, it is an underlying agency to the <b>Ministry of Health</b> .
Does the Ministry who is in charge of health care also have a specific Department or Unit in charge of eHealth/dHealth	Yes	The Ministry of Health does have a <b>department for eHealth</b> . <sup>8</sup>
Is there a national eHealth governance board?	Yes	There is a <b>national council model for eHealth</b> . <sup>9</sup>
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	There is a <b>public eHealth agency on the national level</b> (helsenorge.no). <sup>10</sup>
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, mainly	Sometimes the patients though need to pay a deductible.
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, mainly	The reimbursement of telemedical consultations is in most cases included in the financing system of the specialist health care system, and for the GPs. In the primary health care system as it is mostly block funded in most cases not necessary for patients to pay extra for eHealth compared to standard treatment.
Are there any comprehensive cancer centres focussing on ehealth or telehealth treatments? If yes, which ones and for which specific fields?	Yes	Cancer care is well developed both in Norwegian municipalities and in the specialist health service. <b>Oslo University Hospital OUS</b> is the country's only Comprehensive Cancer Center, and they follow up a wide range of cancer diagnoses. <sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> [E-helseavdelingen - regjeringen.no](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/helse/helseavdelingen)

<sup>9</sup> [Nasjonal rådsmodell - ehelse](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/helse/nasjonal-radsmodell)

<sup>10</sup> [Helsenorge: Information in English - Helsenorge](https://www.helsenorge.no/en)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ous-research.no/home/ous/CCF/17820>

### 3 STRATEGIES/POLICIES

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

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Is there a national eHealth strategy?	Yes	There is a <b>national eHealth strategy</b> (Nasional e-helsestrategi in Norwegian) in place. <sup>12</sup>
If yes, which stakeholder groups have been included in drafting the national eHealth strategy?	All relevant	<b>All relevant healthcare authorities have been included</b> in the making of the strategy in several ways, among others through the national council model. The strategy has also been through an extensive hearing before going public.
Are there regional eHealth strategies? If so, can you indicate whether in all regions or only some? Can you provide some (exemplary) documents ?	Yes	There are <b>four regional health companies/authorities</b> <sup>13</sup> in Norway and each of them has their <b>own strategy</b> (including eHealth) <b>as well as an overall strategy</b> for the regional health companies/authorities. <sup>14</sup> Annual assignment documents are provided. <sup>15</sup>
If yes, which stakeholder groups have been included in drafting such regional strategy/ies?	Varies	The <b>inclusion of stakeholder groups varies from region to region.</b>
Are there strategy/ies explicitly referring to / including eHealth cancer care?	Yes	There is a <b>national cancer strategy</b> , which also refers to eHealth. It expired in 2022 (but has been prolonged to 2023), a new one is on the way. <sup>16</sup>  The use of technology is a central part of the development of Norwegian health and care services. The design of plans and strategies will largely be such that they take care of the diversity of diagnoses and conditions, including cancer. Generic solutions are central in a sustainability perspective and the national e-health strategy for the municipal health and care sector is an example of such a plan. <sup>17</sup>  In the Norwegian context, there are also examples of more pointed plans and initiatives. Oslo University Hospital (OUS CCC) has developed a regional cancer strategy. Although the strategy does not refer directly to eHealth, there are points on home follow-up, home hospitals and digital interaction with patients.
If not, are there discussions ongoing to develop a national eHealth strategy?	N/A	See above
Is there a National Cancer Plan? And does it refer to eHealth?	Yes	Norway has a national cancer strategy (which is extended until 2023) and a new strategy is being developed. The existing strategy states: <i>"Patients must be given the opportunity to have easier contact with the health and care service through digital dialogue and access to their own records. The government will digitize several health services and create the patient's online health service. A greater degree of</i>

<sup>12</sup> [Nasional e-helsestrategi for helse- og omsorgssektoren - ehelse](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Oversikt over landets helseforetak - regjeringen.no](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Nasional helse- og sykehusplan 2020-2023 - regjeringen.no](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Oppdragsdokument - regjeringen.no](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Leve med kreft. Nasjonal kreftstrategi \(2018–2022\) \(regjeringen.no\)](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Nasional e-helsestrategi for helse- og omsorgssektoren - ehelse](#)

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
		<i>digitization offers opportunities for better health services and more efficient use of resources, but will also require investments, and also presents new challenges, e.g. in privacy and information security</i> <sup>18</sup>
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	There is the coming cancer strategy 2023. <sup>19</sup> Cancer care in Norway consists of many stakeholders, plans and initiatives, and the initial investigations have so far found no plans to update central strategies that refer to cancer and technology. The introduction and use of technology within the health sector in Norway is increasing at all levels. There is therefore reason to believe that both any updates to existing strategies and the design of new strategies, within health in general and cancer in particular, will have the use of technology as an important part of service provision.
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 national quality indicators, but info on the use of eHealth in cancer care can be found in the national health registry.
Are there any other cancer care specific eHealth initiatives, f.e. by other stakeholders than policy makers / public authorities?	Yes	There are many ongoing and planned projects, ventures and initiatives in the area of cancer. Several of these contain greater or lesser elements of technology use. These initiatives can be found both within the specialist health service, research environments, technology environments, interest organizations and in combinations of collaboration between these actors.

## 4 LEGISLATION

Table 4 : Overview on eHealth and cancer legislation – Norway

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
How would you evaluate the current state of legislation of eHealth in your country in general?	N/A	No further information available.
Is there legislation on how to use telemedicine in general?	Yes	There is legislation on telemedicine/eHealth <sup>20</sup> , but no separate law on the topic. In general, eHealth is covered by the ‘ordinary’ health legislation.
Is there legislation explicitly referring to cancer prevention?	Yes	There is legislation on cancer prevention (e.g., tobacco and alcohol legislation) <sup>21</sup> , but no separate law on the topic.
Is there legislation explicitly referring to / including eHealth cancer care?	No	There are several laws (for example the Public Health Act) which aim to prevent health damage, including cancer, but cancer is not explicitly mentioned in any law apart from the tobacco and alcohol legislation which indirectly helps to prevent cancer.

<sup>18</sup> [https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/266bf1eec38940888a589ec86d79da20/regjeringens\\_kreftstrategi\\_180418.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/266bf1eec38940888a589ec86d79da20/regjeringens_kreftstrategi_180418.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/leve-med-kreft/id2598282/>

<sup>20</sup> [Relevante lover og forskrifter - ehelse](#)

<sup>21</sup> [Sentrale lover og forskrifter \(kreftregisteret.no\)](#)

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
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).	Yes	<p>The introduction of technology as part of services in both the specialist health service and in the municipality is still a relatively new area. Both legislation, funding systems and professional development must be adapted and harmonized for technology to become a well-functioning part of the services. This applies to both cancer and other diagnoses and conditions.</p> <p>There is no legislation that specifically mentions cancer treatment and the use of technology. Legal considerations when using technology in treatment is included in the general and diagnosis-independent legislation in the health area. The Personal Data Act/GDPR will apply to the processing of personal data, and the legislation is a barrier with regard to the possibility of sharing data between the specialist healthcare service and the municipalities. At the moment, scaling and expanding the use of technology in cancer care appears to be a central challenge. A barrier appears to be the funding system. There is no charge for consultation to follow up on home follow-up or digital communication with the patients.</p> <p>There is no charge for consultation to follow up on home follow-up or digital communication with the patients.</p>
What could be improved or would need to be done to improve these legislation for eHealth in cancer care in your country?		It seems not necessarily the legislation that is the main barrier. Financing systems, procurement, competence – all might play a more important role here.

## 5 CANCER SPECIFIC EHEALTH SOLUTIONS

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

Area of application/ type of solutions	Login Websites	Apps	Webinars	Multi- disciplinary teleconferences (HCP-HPC)	Teleconsultation (HCP-patient)	Telemonitorin g via devices	Other, please specify
<b>Ecosystem</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Prevention of Cancer</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Treatment of Cancer</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>'Living with cancer'</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Rehabilitation from Cancer</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Palliative Cancer Care</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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

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.	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?	No	There is no specific certification for cancer e-health tools, however a general system for CE-marking of medical equipment, also e-health related is in place. The Directorate of Medical Products is responsible for the CE-markings in Norway.
How many Health Care Providers use such solutions? Which sector uses rather which types of solutions?	N/A	No further information available.