

## epSOS makes strong start

Tags: [Commission](#) [E-Prescribing](#) [Ehealth](#) [epSOS](#) [European](#) [European Commission](#) [Health](#) [IHE](#) [interoperability](#) [patient](#) [patients](#) [standards](#) [Sweden](#) [US](#)

**25 Feb 2009**

Europe's flagship 12-nation electronic health record interoperability project, epSOS, has made a strong start with new countries now asking to join.

Already the Smart Open Services for European Patients (epSOS) project involves 27-players from 12 European states. Participants include ministries of health, national competency centres and industry.

Backed by €11m of European Commission funding, together with a similar sum from industry partners, epSOS aims to create open services that will allow the creation of cross-border electronic patient records, beginning with patient summaries and e-prescribing.

The multi-national project is being led by host national Sweden, which has already made progress developing a national summary patient record.

Speaking at eHealth 2009 in Prague last week, Frederik Linden, one of the key project co-ordinators, said that eight months after launch the project had achieved its initial aims of defining what a patient summary is, and selecting initial pilot sites.

Linden said the aim of epSOS was to "move from strategies to services". He added: "Its time to get our money's worth out of investments made in this area".

Unlike some projects on electronic records and interoperability, he stressed that the technical issues were not the main focus.

As well as the 12 initial countries who first applied, five more have said they now want to join. But the criteria to participate is tough, said Linden: "The key to join is to have practical pilots."

In addition to being backed by the European Commission and member states, the project is also being strongly supported by industry. An industry team of 35 firms is now working on the project – working through the auspices of IHE Europe. To join each firm must commit at least two man months.

At the national level there are now 18 competence centres and 100s of individual contributors.

"We are in month eight and have just finished first work packages – a definition of what esummary is and selection of pilot sites."

Linden outlined the ambition of the implementation plans: to move from e-prescription in 5 countries by 2008 and then 10 by 2010. "I am confident we will meet minimum goal of epSOS, of 6 pilot sites and probably exceed it."

He added that the Swedish experience of e-prescribing showed the value of defining common standards and services. "In Sweden we did the first e-prescription in 1983, but it wasn't until 1997 until a defined e-prescription was agreed and use really began to take off.

The goals on the cross-border, interoperable patient summary are equally ambitious: to move from the two states that currently have one to eight by 2010.

"Convinced we have the possibility to meet the goals – I'm actually glad we only have two in places so far, as gives us possibility to be flexible," said Linden.

However, he stressed that the project still remained at an early stage with key questions still to be resolved.

### Link

[epSOS](#)

© 2009 E-HEALTH-MEDIA LTD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



0  
tweets  
tweet