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### European Commission Seeks Views on Improving Healthcare by Applying ICT

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The European Commission is seeking citizens' and other interested parties' views on how the EU can help to deliver widespread benefits to the quality and efficiency of healthcare by applying information and communication technologies (ICT) otherwise known as e-health.

Promoting e-health is a key objective of the Digital Agenda for Europe. The online public consultation runs until 25 May. The answers will feed into the preparation of the eHealth Action Plan 2012-2020 that the Commission is due to present before the end of 2011.

Neelie Kroes, European Commission Vice President for the Digital Agenda, said: "At a time when individuals and governments need to watch every euro, e-health can help to improve the efficiency of healthcare systems and boost the economy as well as empowering patients. I welcome everybody's views on how e-health can best be used for the benefit of all."

The Commission is inviting all interested parties, including healthcare professionals and patients, to give their feedback on the main benefits of e-health, the main barriers preventing large-scale deployment, and the actions the European Commission should take to overcome them. In addition, stakeholders can provide their views on the best ways to improve interoperability, on how the Commission should address legal issues related to e-health and on the best ways to support innovation.

Specifically, the questionnaire seeks feedback on the following goals:

- To increase awareness of the benefits and opportunities of e-health;
- To address the problems of interoperability of e-health technologies;
- To improve legal certainty for ehealth; and
- To support innovation and research in e-health.

The forthcoming 2012-2020 eHealth Action Plan will be an opportunity to build on the actions of the first such Action Plan (see IP/04/580) which was launched in 2004. It will aim to take these actions a step further and provide a longer-term vision for e-health in Europe, in the context of the Digital Agenda for Europe as well as the Innovation Union and European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing.

The answers must be submitted by 25 May and they will feed into the eHealth Action Plan for 2012-2020.

For more information, please visit: [http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/digitalagenda/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digitalagenda/index_en.htm)

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