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Renewing Health Project: Pan-European Telemedicine Data Expected In 2012

RENEWING Health (REgioNs of Europe WorkINg toGether for HEALTH), a European pilot project aimed at implementing largescale real-life test beds for the validation and subsequent evaluation of innovative telemedicine services, will have all of the participating nine regions running their trials by February 2011, with final results expected by autumn 2012.

The project, officially launched in February 2010 and co-financed by the European Commission's Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme and the nine regions involved, is scheduled for 32 months in total and seeks to generate data for European healthcare systems so that telemedicine can be adopted as part of regular care for chronically ill patients. It is one of the largest ever telemedicine clinical trials, involving up to 8,000 patients in the intervention groups with cardiovascular disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or diabetes from nine regions in different parts of Europe. The Veneto region in Italy is leading the project. Other regions involved include Southern Denmark, Northern Norway, Norrbotten in Sweden, Catalonia in Spain, South Karelia in Finland, central Greece, Carinthia in Austria and Berlin in Germany.

Although integration of the service solutions at regional level is the highest priority for the Project partners, the use of international standards and the progressive convergence towards common interoperable architectures will be equally sought to prepare and facilitate their subsequent scaling up at national and European levels.

Renewing Health will attempt to quantify the benefit of telemedicine in terms of health economic outcomes by including various indicators such as the number and length of hospital stays and access to the emergency department. According to Marco d'Angelantonio, Project Manager of Renewing Health on behalf of the Veneto Region, this data should make it easier for healthcare systems to invest in personal health systems and telemedicine infrastructure. Renewing Health also differs from conventional telemedicine trials as it works with existing telemedicine services and does not seek to simultaneously develop new technologies whilst the scale of the project will enable it to fulfill the European Commission's explicit demands to provide a critical mass in order to produce convincing data.

For more information, please visit:
www.renewinghealth.eu

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