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The German Association of Hospital IT Managers

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On 20 – 21 September 2006, the 10th Anniversary of the foundation of the German Association of Hospital IT Managers (KH-IT) was celebrated with a special anniversary meeting in Kassel, Germany. Initiated by Professor Dr. Peter Haas, this working community of IT Managers from German hospitals was created 11th December 1996 in Kassel by a group of 70 interested IT Managers. The primary goal was to share the common experiences and themes about information technology and to improve the organisation of IT in healthcare facilities. In doing this, it was believed that the interests of IT Managers in German hospitals would have a common exchange throughout Germany.

In the German market, the cooperation with and between both product-orientated and scientific healthcare communities has had a high priority. In the beginning of its formation, the KH-IT initiated workgroups to work out a general concept for the personal structures of IT Departments in hospitals. At the same time, another workgroup created proposals for achieving a better exchange of information between German Hospital IT Managers.

In the past ten years, German hospital IT Managers have come together in KH-IT at some 28 meetings and other special events, many of which were also organised in cooperation with other healthcare organisations. Beneath the intensive exchange of experiences about the major themes of IT, the organisation of KH-IT has been focused on responding to the requirements of rapidly-changing IT structures in healthcare institutions and the resulting developments in healthcare software. It was difficult to harmonise those needs with the need for professional IT project management without complications. Nevertheless, this experience combined with the introduction of diagnostic-related groups for billing became the basis to form the KH-IT as the official voice of German hospital IT Managers against the interests of the software industry and government. Hence, on 3rd March 2003, the Association of German Hospital IT Managers was founded from this working community. After just a short period of time, KH-IT signed up over 100 members. Since then, it has continued to grow to more than 250 members.



The Enlarged Board of Directors, German Association of Hospital IT Managers, at their 10th Anniversary Congress, 20-21 September, 2006

With the initiation of the new German smartcard for assurance members, KH-IT began a dialog with the German government about health telematics in Germany, in conjunction with other relevant healthcare IT communities. The KH-IT follows the aim of "Better IT for Health", prompting requests to improve German healthcare telematics for optimal practical use.

Quickly changing healthcare laws combined with rapid developments in information technologies and their introduction into hospital organisations has led to questions about what direction the healthcare IT sector is heading in, what new technologies are being developed and what impact these changes will have on healthcare institutions and IT Managers, amongst others. With the anniversary meeting of KH-IT, future developments in information technology were explored, as well as other related discussions with a presentation of honours of distinguished industry and science leaders. A highlight of the event were the discussions between KH-IT members, who were asked to prepare statements about trends and the future needs of IT in healthcare.

For more information on the German Association of Hospital IT Managers, please consult: www.kh-it.de.

