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The World Health Care Congress Europe 2008, Berlin, Germany

This year's 4th session of the World Health Care Congress Europe opened its doors with an executive seminar on Innovative Care Management Services sponsored by Accenture. Dr. Thomas Zahn discussed the concept of ACMS as well as the results of their pilot in Germany and the implementation phase with Health Dialog/CNAMTS in France. During the three conference days, four concurrent summits invited experts and participants in the field of Chronic Disease Management (Summit 1), Health IT Implementation (Summit 2), Health System Performance (Summit 3), Quality and Patient Safety Improvement (Summit 4) to express their views.

Within the first Summit, Prof. Richard Grol focused on the development of evidencebased medicine as a means to dramatically improve quality in chronic care after years of inadequate efforts. In his perspective, a positive attitude and culture at the workplace is seen as crucial for sustainable change. In terms of measurement of performance, Bert Vrijhoef (Netherlands) underlined the necessity of complex interventions and their evaluation in order to measure success in chronic care programs. An example of a National Strategy was provided by Israel's Prof. Shani who showed that even in a country with just four existing HMOs (and excellent IT systems), several problems persist in terms of integrating data from different sources alongside the lack of definitions and common diagnostic references.

The 2nd Summit focused on the EHR and its utility for improved care and workflow as well as telehealth and remote monitoring. Dipak Kalra's presentation on a common standard for sharing EHR worldwide was an excellent overview of why semantic interoperability remains a key challenge.

Last but not least, the 3rd and 4th Summits focused on payers and providers and focused on issues of healthcare performance and patient safety. Guenter Danner's deliberations on national reforms of healthcare under the EU's supranational economic constraints questioned the balance between State intervention and rationing on the one hand and free choice and market solutions on the other. Furthermore, the presentation on patient safety by Benedetta Allegranzi (from the WHO World Alliance for Patient Safety First Global Patient Safety Challenge) explained the reasons behind the launch of the First Global Patient Safety Challenge the following year (which

aims at tackling healthcare-associated infections worldwide).

For more information, please visit: <http://www.worldcongress.com/Europe>

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