

DITIS - VIRTUAL COLLABORATIVE TEAMS FOR HOME HEALTHCARE

Category: Project

Sub-objective: generation of innovation via addressing unmet needs identified by formal or informal providers of healthcare

Country: Cyprus

Intro:

DITIS is a system that supports dynamic Virtual Collaborative Medical Teams dealing with the home-healthcare. It supports the dynamic creation, management and co-ordination of virtual medical teams, for the continuous treatment of the patient at home, and if needed for periodic visits to places of specialized treatment and back home. DITIS is an Internet (web) based Group Collaboration system with secure fixed and GPRS/GSM/WAP mobile connectivity.

Problem:

Care of chronic illnesses (e.g. cancer patients) by a team of health care professionals at home is often necessary due to the protracted length of the illness, the differing medical conditions, as well as the different stages of the chronic illness. More specifically, home care can offer comfort for the patient and their family, in the familiar surrounding of their home, and at the same time being cost effective, as compared to the high cost of hospital beds.

Solution:

DITIS was designed to deliver a product that can improve the quality of the citizen's life. Contrary to state of the art health processing structure which is, in all practical terms facility-based care, this project aimed to shift the focus into home-based care, where everything is moving around the patient. The virtual healthcare team was able to provide dedicated, personalized and private service to the home residing patient on a need based and timely fashion, under the direction of the treating specialist. The main goal was the chronic and severe patients, such as cancer patients, to enjoy 'optimum' health service in the comfort of their home (i.e. a focus on wellness), feeling safe and secure that in case of a change in their condition the health care team would be (virtually) present to support them.

Quadruple-helix cooperation roles:

The project and its consortium's composition is a classic example of how the utilization of the quadruple helix approach can provide such accurate and qualitative results that may resolve in a catalytically manner certain problems after identifying real needs (1 NGO, 3 public institutions, 1 university and 6 SMEs).

Impact:

Thru DITIS, the face of cancer care and telecommunications in Cyprus has transformed. The Bank of Cyprus Oncology Centre is working with the team of DITIS on direct referrals through the system and security issues. Also the new technologies of ADSL and GPRS offer

easier access by the health care team to current patient information and each other, at all times, and from anywhere. The results of an initial assessment on the cost benefits indicate the usefulness of the system to all stakeholders.

Concluding, chronic patients, such as the cancer patient, can now enjoy 'optimum' health service, with improved quality of life, in the warmth of their own friendly environment, without a degradation in the quality of care provided to them, feeling safe and secure that in case of a change in their condition the health care team will be (virtually) present to support them

Transferability to home care:

DITIS could easily be transferred and adapted for rehabilitation, monitoring and training that are required for other (chronic) health problems and diseases in home-care practices. No technical limitation should be faced in EU countries. The main barrier would be the training curve and the translation of the platform documentation.