Bridging the gap between research and healthcare

In the initiative’s first phase, university hospitals and partner organisations are to establish and link data integration centres. These centres will allow research and healthcare data to be aggregated and integrated across multiple entities and sites.

Additionally, innovative IT solutions for concrete medical applications will be developed to demonstrate the benefits of high-tech digital healthcare services and infrastructures.

Examples of specific applications:

- Multiple sclerosis,
- Parkinson’s disease,
- Cardiology,
- Infection control,
- Appropriate antibiotics use,
- Precision medicine for tumour patients,
- Improvements to healthcare processes.

THE INITIATIVE

The German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) launched its medical informatics funding scheme to make data from healthcare and research more useful and meaningful. It plans to provide 150 million euros in the coming years, with the aim of strengthening medical research and improving patient care.

[www.bmbf.de/de/medizininformatik-3342.html]

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The aim of the German medical informatics initiative is to ensure that, in future, each doctor, patient and researcher has access to the information they require. This will lead to more precise diagnostics, and better treatment decisions. It will yield new insights for effectively and sustainably combatting diseases, and will help advance patient care. At the same time, robust data protection and security will be a top priority.

The initiative was launched to close the gap between research and healthcare. Nearly all of Germany’s university hospitals are taking part. They have joined forces with research institutions, businesses, health insurers, and patient advocacy groups to develop solutions, processes and resources that allow research findings to be harnessed to the direct benefit of patients. The German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) plans to invest a total of 150 million euros in the programme in the coming years.

IT solutions will enable the effective exchange and use of data from healthcare, and from clinical and biomedical research.

The digitisation of medicine is creating new opportunities
Consortia and participants during the development and networking phase

**DIPFUTURE**

**CONSORTIUM PARTNERS**

Augsburg:
- University of Augsburg (UA)
- Bochum:
- Karms GmbH (HAIRIS)

Munich:
- Technical University of Munich (TUM) / University Hospital rechts der Isar (MIR)
- Ludwig Maximilians University Munich (LMU) / Ludwig Maximilians University Hospital (LMU)
- University Hospital Magdeburg (UKM)

Regensburg:
- Eberhard Karls University Tübingen (EKUT) / University Hospital Tübingen (UHT)

**NETWORK PARTNERS**

Hamburg:
- Saarland University Medical Center
- Regensburg:
- University Hospital Regensburg
- Saarbrücken:
- Saarland University

**HiGHmed**

**CONSORTIUM PARTNERS**

Berlin:
- Robert Koch Institute
- Ada Health GmbH
- Brunswick:
- Brunswick University of Technology (TU Brunswick)

Darmstadt:
- Darmstadt University of Technology (TU Darmstadt)
- Erlangen:
- Siemens Healthcare GmbH
- Göttingen:
- University Medical Center Göttingen
- WrkNw University of Applied Sciences and Arts Goettingen

Hannover:
- Hannover Medical School
- Hannover University of Applied Sciences and Arts
- Heidelberg:
- Heidelberg University Hospital and the Medical Faculty of Heidelberg
- Saarbrücken:
- Saarland University
- Potzdam:
- Hasso Plattner Institute
- Walldorf:
- InterComponentWare AG
- Stuttgart:
- Iismart
- Sana Kliniken AG

**MIRACUM**

**CONSORTIUM PARTNERS**

Erlangen:
- Friedrich Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg / University Hospital Erlangen

Frankfurt:
- Goethe University Frankfurt / University Hospital Frankfurt

Freiburg:
- Medical Faculty of the University of Freiburg / Medical Center – University of Freiburg

Marburg:
- University Hospital Marburg / University Medical Center Giessen / Marburg

**SMITH**

**CONSORTIUM PARTNERS**

Aachen:
- University Hospital RWTH Aachen
- Aachen University (UA)
- RWTH Aachen University

Berlin:
- Charité – University Medicine Berlin
- TUM University of Applied Sciences

Dortmund:
- Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg / University Hospital Magdeburg

Mainz:
- Medical Faculty Mainz / Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz
- Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

Jena:
- University Hospital Jena
- Friedrich Schiller University Jena
- Jülich:
- Forschungszentrum Jülich GmbH (Jülich Research Centre)

Leipzig:
- Leipzig University / Leipzig University Medical Center

Walldorf:
- SAP SE

Wuppertal:
- bayer AG

**NETWORK PARTNERS**

Bielefeld:
- Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg / University Hospital Halle (Saale)

**NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE – COORDINATION OFFICE**

Berlin:
- TFM / MFT / VUD

**FUNDING**

FUNDING is modular in structure and divided into phases to enable responsiveness to real-world developments and changing needs in the coming years. There will also be additional funding modules from the commencement of the development and networking phase; if necessary, the BMBF will publish specific funding policies.

Participation

The medical informatics initiative is open in nature. The goal is that the four consortia recruit additional partners over the course of the project, and share successful solutions with others at a later date.

University hospitals that helped develop plans for data integration centres and were actively involved in the conceptual phase are able to join the four consortia.

Moreover, other organisations can join the initiative as network partners. Specifically, they should have a concrete interest in adopting the consortia-developed IT solutions during the later consolidation and further development phase, beginning in 2022.

Greater success through collaboration

The medical informatics initiative encompasses multiple regions in Germany. Participating institutes and groups must coordinate their activities, and interact with diverse stakeholders. This cross-consortia cooperation, and dialogue with other interested parties, is organised by a dedicated office.

The goal is to ensure that locally developed IT solutions are interoperable with other systems. Furthermore, the new infrastructures must meet very high standards of quality, data protection and security. It is especially important to protect patient data, and to identify, requirements, and concerns of diverse stakeholders – including scientists, doctors, patients, representatives of regulatory bodies, and many others – and to act upon these insights when creating new infrastructures.

To ensure researchers, doctors and, ultimately, patients benefit fully from these advances, further actors – for example outpatient care and private clinics – will be increasingly involved in data exchange from this phase.

All consortia are represented in the corresponding National Steering Committee, with the aim of aligning activities and agreeing parameters. Concept papers, defined requirements, and template texts will be jointly prepared and discussed in dedicated working groups.

Additionally, the Dialogue Forum allows representatives from the various groups to exchange ideas and information. Participants include patient advocacy groups, policy makers, government agencies funding organisations, research centres and other scientific institutions, and healthcare IT industry organisations. The forum ensures that strategic planning is discussed, agreed and supported by all stakeholders.

The coordination office, jointly managed by TFM (Technology, Methodology and Infrastructure for Networked Medical Research), MFT (Medizinischer Fakultätsentag, an association of German medical faculties), and VUD (Verband der Universitätsklinika Deutschlands, which represents a number of German university hospitals), promotes cross-consortia collaboration.