Electronic Case Records and eCR Projectathon at the IHE Europe 2017 Connectathon

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Acute and scheduled care is a regional business, where hospitals and physicians closely cooperate based on established processes and shares of responsibility. In most settings the care participants are nominated in advance by the patient (e.g. family doctor, specialist, hospital).

Profiling IHE Profiles to Regional Care Networks

Electronic Case Records (eCR) define a core IT support infrastructure for sharing medical patient data within such regional, organized and managed care scenarios. eCR takes advance of the clear purpose definitions and the closed user groups inherent to these settings, which allow for many optimizations related to the implementation of even rigid privacy and security regulations. In particular patients may nominate the care team once by giving informed consent instead of being obliged to authorize every single data access. Even more from a data privacy perspective an electronic Case Record is treated as a single document due to the strict definition of its purpose of use. By this there is no need to manage permissions on a single document level – all care providers share the same permissions which hold for the full set of data within the record.

From a technical perspective eCR is a profile on top of existing IHE profiles. Generally spoken, the eCR technical specifications define groupings and constraints on existing IHE integration profiles (XDS, ATNA, XUA, APPC) which allow taking advantage of the enhanced usability features related to a strict purpose definition and closed user group.

From Hospitals – For Hospitals

The eCR specifications are property of the eCR Association, a network of approximately 30 German hospitals and regional care networks (see www.fallakte.de for details). The eCR Association provides all eCR specifications to the public for open and free use at http://wiki.hl7.de/index.php?title=cdaefa:EFA_Spezifikation_v2.0. In 2016 the German Hospital Association sponsored the development of an open source eCR implementation which is made available to the public for non-commercial use at https://gitlab.fokus.fraunhofer.de/efa-oss/.

The (further) development of the eCR specifications is a joint effort of the eCR Association and the German Healthcare IT vendors' Association (bvitg). The eCR Association committed itself to the promotion of interoperable standards and IHE profiles. This not only covers the adoption and integration of existing IHE profiles but even the active participation in the further development of interoperable solutions for holistic care scenarios. E.g. the IHE White Paper on Access Control and the recently published IHE APPC integration profile were both motivated by requirements from running eCR networks.

eCR Projectathon

In 2016 a dedicated eCR Projectathon was organized by IHE Europe and Fraunhofer FOKUS as part of the IHE European Connectathon in Bochum. At this event seven vendors from Germany and Austria

passed the eCR interoperability tests and received respective conformance statements from the eCR Association. Due to the success of this event and the increasing number of public tenders requesting for eCR conformance, another eCR Projectathon will be organized in conjunction to the IHE Europe 2017 Connectathon in Venice. Participation is not restricted to German and Austrain vendors; all test case definitions, support materials, sample messages and testing tools will be provided in English (see http://wiki.hl7.de/index.php?title=cdaefa:EFA_Projectathon_2016 for the documentation of the 2016 eCR Projectathon).

Registration for the 2017 eCR Projectathon is through the IHE Europe Connectathon registration by selecting the actors "eCR Client" and/or "eCR Provider".

Note: A prerequisite for eCR Projectathon registration is that the vendor has registered for interoperability testing of the XDS, ATNA and XUA profile with the IHE Europe 2017 Connectathon. The additional registration fee of 1.500 € for eCR Projectathon participation will be charged independently from the Connectathon fee.