



EFN Policy Statement

eHealth

The EU Council of Ministers (2003) defines eHealth as the application of modern Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to meet the needs of the population: patients, health personnel, health administrators and politicians. eHealth involves the applications of ICT within the whole range of stakeholders and functions that influence the health sector: patients, health personnel, hospitals, municipal health and social services, research and education, leadership and authorities.

The EFN welcomes the eHealth movement with its efficient and effective use of ICT and believes that it is crucially important that all developments in eHealth must:

- focus on patient safety and patient empowerment;
- support **continuity of care** throughout the patient's journey;
- safeguard **citizens' privacy** with mandatory standards for managing confidential information;
- reflect holistic care and multi-professional practice;
- take into consideration both usability and user-friendliness.

Furthermore, the EFN believes that:

- nurses and nursing practice must be involved in all stages of development and implementation of eHealth;
- health professionals and support staff require **education and training** for all aspects of eHealth;
- health information systems must include reference terminology for nursing;
- the development of EU **Quality and Safety Standards** regarding eHealth services should be undertaken.

ICT has great potential for improving health care for the EU community. Nurses must be closely involved in the eHealth development in order to achieve a new, improved and efficient health care system based on information technology.

Please contact **Mr. Paul de Raeve**, General Secretary of the European Federation of Nurses Associations for more details on this issue.

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