Mini Track: 'E-health strategies' (HCEHS)

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Good information is the best medicine said dr. Michael Debakey, but how to come to good information in healthcare? There is no lack of initiatives but they seem to be competitive instead of collaborative. Communication and restoring confidence must prevent that the wheel is invented several times locally and good standards and standard systems have to be delivered centrally. There is no easy solution but it is possible to take small but firm steps in the good direction. There are five directions to go: 1. Create an e-health vision on (inter) national and regional level; 2. Share knowledge between healthcare organisations; 3. Improve co-operation by (tele)communication; 4. Agree on standards for defining and disseminating information; 5. Design new processes to recognise patient groups and optimise their care path. There are some common threads running through these directions for management. First there has to be a balance in national and regional development of ICT in healthcare. Too many initiatives strand because they do not move up or they cannot come down. There is need for a strong commitment in a network of healthcare partners. Secondly, the professional users have to be asked what relevance and which requirements they really need. Too long IT suppliers have dropped their technology in healthcare organisations without asking what was needed. The USE IT and similar models can help to give a prognosis of the success of an information system. Last but not least the walls between healthcare organisations have to be reshaped with the help of IT and the Internet in particular. A combination between the good old healthcare information systems, patient protocols and (bio)medical technology results will be the golden triangle in which the electronic patient record finally will succeed.

The contribution by Lines: "MIS, knowledge production and legitimacy in Health Care Organizations" explores the resource based view of organisations, but concludes that strategic technology planning should consider a number of factors, including organisational politics. The contribution by Tsuji,. Suzuki.and Taoka "An economic evaluation of the japanese telehealth system: for a broader implementation" analysis four areas in Japan in which a system is introduced which translates health-related data of its users to a telecommunication network. Finally, Tähkäpää, J "Managing health care information systems development" discusses the main areas to pay attention to in IS development in public health. The paper is based on Finnish public healthcare.