



Advancing Healthcare Innovation through Pre-Commercial Procurement: Policy Recommendations from the 2CARE4EU Cluster (INCAREHEART, CareMatrix, ROSIA, eCare)

ABSTRACT

The 2CARE4EU cluster, formed through the Horizon Results Booster and composed by EU-funded PCPs INCAREHEART, CareMatrix, ROSIA, and eCARE, promotes policy recommendations to boost public sector innovation. The cluster highlights the public sector's role in spurring innovation and calls for supportive policies at all government levels.

It urges continuous EU investment in demand-driven innovation, especially in underdeveloped regions and for vulnerable groups. The cluster showcases digital solutions from PCPs as key to improving healthcare's continuity, coordination, and patient focus in Europe, advocating for the careful evaluation of IT innovations' impact on **healthcare equity** and emphasizing the necessity to continue advancing on providing **reliable internet** and **digital skills** for successful technology implementation.

Key points

2CARE4EU represents 4 PCP projects.

A common policy brief has been developed.

2CARE4EU considers that public sector demand for innovation should be adjusted for its implementation in national, regional and local policy agendas.

Equity monitoring recommended

INTRODUCTION

2CARE4EU is a collaboration of four EU-funded projects focused on Pre-Commercial Procurement (PCP) for digitally enabled integrated care, highlighting their synergies with respect to collective innovation.



INCAREHEART leads the cluster, procuring ICT solutions for chronic heart failure aiming to transform multidisciplinary care.



CareMatrix aspires to drive market innovation with integrated care solutions for People with Multimorbidity (PMM), addressing the complex needs of older people living with several chronic conditions such as diabetes or heart disease, among others.



ROSIA pioneers in remote rehabilitation, particularly in remote areas, leveraging advanced technology and community support to offer novel care pathways.



eCARE targets the digital prevention and management of frailty, enhancing elder independence and reducing health service burdens. Collectively,

These initiatives represent 2CARE4EU's drive to unify and advance healthcare delivery through innovative solutions, addressing the multifaceted challenges of healthcare systems in the EU.

The collaboration aims to set new standards in healthcare, ensuring continuity, personalized care, and better management of chronic conditions, thereby contributing significantly to the improvement of health outcomes and the sustainability of healthcare systems.

ABOUT

The 2CARE4EU initiative is a collaborative effort comprising four key EU-funded projects:

INCAREHEART, CareMatrix, ROSIA, and eCARE, each dedicated to advancing digitally enabled integrated care solutions.

These projects are united in their mission to **address the specific needs of various stakeholders**, including patients, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and healthcare managers, through the development of tailored, interoperable technological solutions. These solutions are being crafted to meet the explicit needs identified in the early implementation phases of each project, aiming to tackle the distinct challenges identified by procurers.



CONTEXT

The healthcare landscape in Europe is currently navigating through critical **challenges** such as an aging population, the rise of comorbidity and chronic conditions, and the constraints in hospital capacities. In response, the 2CARE4EU PCPs are at the forefront of developing innovative care solutions that **aim to enhance the efficiency and quality of care**.

These initiatives are driven by a vision to **empower patients, facilitate multidisciplinary integrated and continuous care, and promote prevention** through the integration of advanced technologies.

The transition towards new care models, however, encounters various obstacles including issues related to trust, the comprehensibility of AI-based solutions, interoperability at all levels, reimbursement models, resistance to change, and varying levels of digital proficiency. These challenges are being addressed in alignment with the EU's Digital Strategy, which underscores the importance of a human-centric approach to innovation.

2CARE4EU



MISSION

The **objectives** of the 2CARE4EU projects are closely aligned with several key priorities of the EU, particularly those related to the Digital Economy and Society. The EU Digital Strategy emphasises a digital transformation that adheres to fundamental European values, with a strong focus on equality and digital inclusion, ensuring that all EU citizens, especially those living with chronic conditions, can benefit from these advancements.

The eHealth strategy of the EU has outlined three main priorities that the 2CARE4EU projects aim to address:

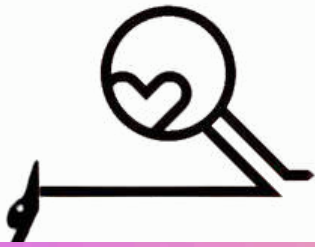
- ✦ **Secure Access to Health Data:** Ensuring that citizens have secure access to their health data, including the ability to access this data across national borders within the EU.
- ✦ **Personalised Medicine:** Advancing personalised medicine through the establishment of a shared European data infrastructure, which will facilitate the analysis and application of health data to tailor medical treatments to individual patient needs.
- ✦ **Citizen Empowerment:** Empowering citizens with digital tools that enable user feedback and promote person-centred care, ensuring that healthcare services are aligned with the personal needs and preferences of each individual.

CONCLUSIONS

Drawing conclusions from the collaborative efforts and insights of the 2CARE4EU initiative, it is evident that advancing digitally enabled integrated care across Europe requires a multifaceted approach, addressing both systemic challenges and leveraging opportunities for innovation. The policy recommendations put forth by 2CARE4EU underscore the necessity for sustained and strategic efforts in various domains to enhance healthcare delivery and outcomes.

These recommendations can be summarized and emphasized as follows:

- ◆ **Sustain Public Sector Demand for Innovation:** The EU's policy agenda should persistently support public sector demand for innovation, emphasizing investment in demand-driven innovation. This includes fostering development and capacity building in less experienced economic sectors and addressing the needs of the most challenged population cohorts.
- ◆ **Leverage PCP Outcomes for Healthcare IT Investments:** The insights and results derived from Pre-Commercial Procurements (PCPs) should inform and guide further investments in healthcare IT, ensuring that such investments are evidence-based and aligned with demonstrated needs and benefits.
- ◆ **Monitor IT Solutions for Equity:** The impact of new IT solutions on healthcare equity must be meticulously monitored at the EU level to ensure that technological advancements contribute to reducing disparities rather than exacerbating them.
- ◆ **Address EHR Fragmentation:** Efforts should be made at the EU level to overcome the fragmentation of Electronic Health Records (EHRs). This involves tackling challenges related to data sharing, interoperability, and standardization, potentially integrating EHR information into the broader EU digital identity framework.
- ◆ **Advance on harmonisation and standardisation of eHealth:** This entails harmonizing regulations, testing, validation and certification processes at the EU level.
- ◆ **Revise Reimbursement Models:** Reimbursement models need to be reevaluated and adapted to support the utilization of digital therapeutics by patients, ensuring that financial mechanisms do not hinder access to innovative care solutions in the different competent levels.
- ◆ **Ensure Prerequisites for Digital Health:** The advancement of digital health is contingent upon several critical prerequisites, including widespread internet connectivity, high digital literacy among patients and clinicians, and comprehensive and continuous training for healthcare professionals. Initiatives like the Digital Skills Pact can significantly contribute to achieving these prerequisites.



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Learn more about the
2CARE4EU Cluster projects:

INCAREHEART
<https://incareheart.eu/>



ROSIA
<https://rosia-pcp.eu/>



CareMatrix
<https://carematrix.eu/>



eCare
<https://ecare-pcp.eu/>



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