



Malta



Describe a successful or challenging e-health initiative your country has taken.

Malta's e-health initiatives are being developed within the framework of the Government's development plan of a high speed network infrastructure, together with the launch of web-based applications such as the e-health portal and with major investment into a new Integrated Healthcare Information System.

What were the financial challenges and costs associated with implementation of this programme?

The main challenges for implementation have been the huge burden invoked by our limited resources and funds.

What have been the main technological challenges to implementing e-health in your country?

The main technological challenges have been the lack of availability of local expertise on the development of standardised software when compared with international companies offering a range of already established healthcare information systems. The geographical location of our island has also proved to be a limiting factor.

Have any ethical issues been raised during the design and implementation of e-health programmes?

Issues of sensitive changes to legal status of a citizen, when it comes to maintenance of databases of citizens and legal guardians are being resolved electronically.

Has the implementation of e-health programmes required any legal or regulatory changes?

All information systems implemented within government have to abide by the government of Malta's ICT policies, directives, standards and to the enacted Acts of Parliament, namely the Electronic Commerce Act and the Data Protection Act, to criminal code provisions which make computer misuse a criminal offence and also to Government's National ICT Strategy. Currently a national e-health Vision and Strategy is being drafted for eventual public consultation.

What have been the outcomes of your e-health initiatives?

The Integrated Healthcare Information System within the newly developed Mater Dei hospital is initially seeing the first six applications amongst which are a Laboratory Information System, a Radiology Information System and a Picture Archiving and Communication System.

Whereas the e-health portal currently serves as the main communication interface between the citizen, the health professional and the health service, for applications such as the online application for a European Health Insurance Card amongst others.