

EUROPEAN HEALTH SUMMIT 2023

7th December 2023 – Egmont Palace, Brussels

The 2024 – 2029 Agenda: the Future of Healthcare in Europe

Main Focus Areas

Quantum Computing in the Healthcare Sector

In recent years, the interdisciplinary field of quantum computing has rapidly developed and garnered substantial interest from both academia and industry due to its ability to process information in fundamentally different ways. Healthcare will particularly benefit from quantum computing as it can speed up the drug design and test process, offering new medicines that could save potentially thousands of lives. For drug companies, this would save them millions, in years of drug testing and drug development.

Because of its speed and efficient computing power, it could also be able to sequence or analyze whole human genomes much faster than a regular computer. This faster genetic analysis could lead to a tidal wave of consequences, from better genetic screenings for genetic diseases to more accurate drug screens. Most of all, it will support doctors in taking a perfect decision, therefore analyze and compare studies more quickly.

Ensuring that EU investment in non-communicable diseases (Cancer, CVD, Diabetes) reaches patients and improves outcomes

While the Commission has recently launched a €156 million initiative on NCDs in Europe, how can we ensure that such expenditure is having a positive impact for patients? What approaches and responses are needed to reduce avoidable premature death in Europe while moving towards a preventative approach? Although the EU has unveiled a Beating Cancer Plan, how can the EU show more ambition towards diabetes and cardiovascular disease?

Fostering a proactive European approach for mental health

The policy and financial resources dedicated to mental health do not match the need and investment in other disease areas. Mental health is a key component of individual, social and economic wellbeing. Today, science and technology offer new avenues for innovation in mental health prevention, treatment, and care. It offers the possibility to revisit the way we think about mental illnesses and change trajectories. It is therefore vital to advance a European agenda for mental health through engagement with policy and industry.

Strengthening public, private, academia and tech partnerships to advance R&D for unmet needs

For R&D to flourish and engender scientific breakthroughs, a conducive environment is needed. Some countries are beginning to create ecosystems for healthcare innovation, creating essential links between the scientific community, big tech, governments and the public-private sectors. This will allow them to develop and operationalise new treatments in record time. How can the EU keep up with other regions and what steps are needed for a coordinated response?

A Pharma Strategy to foster Europe`s competitiveness on the global scale?

Europe has all the ingredients to drive innovation. It is very attractive for biopharmaceuticals, and has a highly skilled workforce, as well as promising drugs and treatments, especially in the field of rare diseases. However, the pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability of our supply chains and the need to make them more resilient. Among other concerns, there is a need to reform the healthcare sector to optimise budgets and sustainability. We need real data to highlight drug efficacy and increase population and market access. Ensuring that we have the right environment for innovation, supported by strong industrial policy, is critical to continue to foster investment in Europe.

Ensuring sustainable healthcare systems through the 'One Health' approach

With a global population that is both growing and ageing, health systems will come under increased pressure. By considering a wider set of contributory factors for healthcare such as healthy nutrition, sustainable food, environmental, agricultural, fisheries and climate policies, we can foster resilience. The COVID-19 pandemic, other disease outbreaks and their societal and economic costs highlight the urgency of applying a One Health approach across all sectors.

Building a solid infrastructure for the European Digital Health

The benefits of the EHDS are unrivalled and progress is being made towards its implementation. However, ensuring that its necessary components are in place will also be crucial. The question now centres around bolstering sufficient infrastructure, in tandem with both the public and private sectors, to ensure the highest levels of access, privacy and operability. Going a step further, this year EHS will be exploring how quantum computing can accelerate patient centricity in Europe.

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