

Dear All,

Some of you may have seen the article in this week's Sunday Business Post here in Ireland which described the short term challenge that Ireland's minister for health has set the eHealth Ireland team. Ireland has an issue with growing waiting lists and thus far digital solutions have not been adopted to attempt to impact upon this problem. The Minister's challenge asks that we propose a set of digital solutions to him in the next two weeks that he can then consider for development, procurement and implementation.

We want to do this in an open and inclusive way and as such call on all of our partners, vendors and potential suppliers to understand what you think the solution sets should be for this. We anticipate that the solution will compose of multi-channel communications with the end user, authenticated access to referral / appointment details, limited interaction to enable detail/schedule changes, interfacing online and offline with Hospital systems, and scheduling/optimising/process enablement systems.

We will commence procurement both by way of open competition, and through the utilisation of existing contracts and supply frameworks. As part of a market intelligence and pre-procurement phase we would ask you to summarise in 300 words or less your product offering within the scope of the challenge and how you could support us during the delivery phase. If you are in a position to submit please reply and we will furnish a suggested template.

I have assigned Gregory Johnston and Michelle Kearns within the Office of the CIO to prepare response document which will be delivered to the Minister on the 5th September and to be made public on the 9th of September. If you could revert by the 30th of August that would provide enough time to incorporate your material. Any content provided that is relevant to the challenge and meets the criteria set out above will be made available as the appendix to this document therefore making it clear to the minister the types of solutions that are available to Ireland and the results partnerships could have.

If you have any questions please get in touch with Gregory or Michelle. You will note the deadline for this work is tight and your early response on any suggested involvement you may wish to have on this challenge will be appreciated.

Thanks

Richard Corbridge

Chief Information Officer | Office of the Chief Information Officer | HSE | Dr. Steevens' Hospital | Dublin 8 | Eircode D08 W2A8
Chief Officer | eHealth Ireland | HSE | Dr. Steevens' Hospital | Dublin 8 | Eircode D08 W2A8

Gregory Johnston gregory.johnston@hse.ie
Michelle Kearns michelle.kearns1@hse.ie

18th August 2016

Mr Tony O'Brien
Director General
Health Service Executive
Dr Steevens' Hospital
Dublin 8

Re: eHealth Ireland & waiting lists

Dear Tony,

I write further to recent briefings I have received on new and innovative solutions being made available by the eHealth Ireland team within the HSE and my meeting with Richard Corbridge and the team on Wednesday last, as well as our continuing engagement on tackling waiting lists.

It is clear that healthcare problems across the globe are moving more and more towards digital solutions. In 2016 Ireland has made a number of leaps forward in how it uses digital to answer safety, efficiency and capacity issues throughout our healthcare system.

eReferral is a solution now available in every hospital in Ireland - a single system for the transferral of the referral note from the GP surgery to the hospital, quickly, safely and securely. The referral is the first stage in creating a waiting list and, through the work of the eHealth team, we have now the ability to make this digital throughout Ireland by the end of 2016. This will create savings across the system of over €1.2m in 2016 but, more importantly, it provides patients with assurances that the referral is with the hospital that they need to go to before they leave the GP surgery.

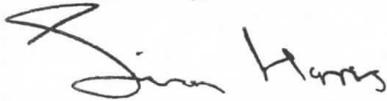
If digital can alter this part of the process, make these kinds of savings and assure patients, then I want to know what it can do for the rest of the process.

I am today providing the eHealth Ireland team with a challenge; I am asking that in two weeks they submit answers to a number of questions that I feel could have significant impact upon the waiting list here in Ireland today.

How can we enable a patient to see their referral in real time? How can we enable a patient to make administrative changes to their referral without having to attend a hospital? How can we create a reminder service for patient's referrals? How can we use information on referrals to better manage capacity and demand across the system? And finally how can we use digital to safely and efficiently manage the discharge process, so the patient is in the right setting at the right time?

I am challenging eHealth Ireland to describe to me how these issues could be resolved with a digital solution because in other jurisdictions this has brought significant patient benefits, created a new transparency to the referral process and delivered efficiencies that are not possible without a digital solution. It is not the only solution that can be put in place so I would suggest it is the first part of a 12 month plan to apply digital solutions to this issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Simon Harris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Simon" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Harris".

Simon Harris TD
Minister for Health