

Foreword

OECD countries are increasingly concerned with having the right data infrastructure in place for producing health statistics and measuring health care quality and outcomes. This relates to information gathered through registries, administrative data, EHRs, and other sources – and concerns data linkage between settings and levels of care, and mechanisms to generate and use timely, actionable data. Interest in strengthening health information systems has grown since the COVID-19 pandemic has brought into sharp focus the importance of reliable, up-to-date information for decision making.

The OECD launched country reviews of health information systems in January 2021 to support countries in developing health information systems for the digital age. Country reviews follow a method where OECD and national experts jointly undertake a process of uncovering the barriers and facilitators to each country's progress toward a 21st Century health information system. With a common core of content, the reviews can be compared across participating countries, furthering the value of the project to all countries.

The framework for the evaluation of each health information system is the [OECD Council Recommendation on Health Data Governance](#) which calls for National Health Data Governance Frameworks and sets out the key principles of such frameworks. All countries are encouraged to adhere to this Recommendation which provides guidance for building national governance frameworks that enable personal health data to be both protected and used towards public policy goals. The Recommendation:

- Encourages the availability and use of personal health data, to the extent that this enables significant improvements in health, health care quality and performance and, thereby, the development of healthy societies while, at the same time, continuing to promote and protect the fundamental values of privacy and individual liberties;
- Promotes the use of personal health data for health-related public policy objectives, while maintaining public trust and confidence that any risks to privacy and security are minimised and appropriately managed; and
- Supports greater harmonisation among the health data governance frameworks of Adherents so that more countries can benefit from statistical and research uses of data in which there is a public interest, and so that more countries can participate in multi-country statistical and research projects, while protecting privacy and data security.

The first country review undertaken was of the health information infrastructure of the Netherlands in 2021. The Netherlands' Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport commissioned the review to support the country in reforming a fragmented data landscape into an integrated health information system that would meet the needs of Dutch society in the digital age. This review supports the Netherlands as it embarks on reforms to safely use health data to power integrated, patient-centred, services and foster medical and health R&D.



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