

Prioritization of Actions Needed to Develop IT Skills Among Healthcare Workforce

Sisi Li*, Panagiotis D Bamidis**, Stathis Konstantinidis***, Vicente Traver****, Nabil Zary*

*Karolinska Institutet, Sweden; **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece; ***University of Nottingham, United Kingdom; ****Polytechnical University of Valencia, Spain

Background: Health related information and communication technology is globally an important and growing sector. With the promise of more efficient and cost-effective care, eHealth is becoming a key priority to address the current challenges faced by health systems worldwide. Addressing IT skills for healthcare workforce is seen as an important element of achieving greater social inclusion.

Objective: To identify the actions needed to improve the IT skills of healthcare workforce across the EU. In addition, to identify priorities among the identified actions with collaboration of healthcare experts.

Methods: A diverse group of technical experts, representing different fields of expertise in healthcare and geographical locations participated in the study. A scientific priority-setting methodology was used to systematically list and score actions that would improve IT skills among healthcare workforce. The participants evaluated the actions using several criteria: feasibility, effectiveness, deliverability, and maximum impact on IT skills improvement.

Results: The actions that scored highest were related to appropriate training, integrating eHealth in curriculum, involving health workforce in the eHealth solution development, improving awareness of eHealth as well as learning arrangement. The actions that scored lowest related to the workforce management, identification of IT skills needed, joint funding for training program and training on potential workforce.

Conclusion: To maintain a highly IT skilled health workforce, eHealth related knowledge and skills in current curricula, improving awareness of eHealth and continuous training according to the different professionals' needs should be addressed. In addition, health professionals should be actively and continuously included in the development of eHealth solutions.