

## Preface

Common and widespread Internet access changes the relationship between patients and health care providers, both in areas with well-developed and less developed care systems. The future of efficient healthcare relies on the competent, informed and self-caring patients. Personal Health Record (PHR) systems are emerging and strive to become a patient empowering tool that supports the patient in collecting and sharing relevant health information and thereupon take more active control over his own health situation.

The major goal of the ISePHR 2006 symposium, held in conjunction with HelseIT 2006, in Trondheim, Norway, was to bring together users, researchers and developers, from both industry and academia, to study, explore and discuss the opportunities and challenges posed by electronic personal health records. The articles in these proceedings are extended versions of a selection of the papers from the original symposium. The articles address several aspects of PHR systems, from technological foundations, generic systems to specific systems for particular diagnosis and symptoms.

William Crawford gives an overview of the use of personal health records, and how a great variety of systems are referred to as personal health records. He then described how personal health records can be developed, and how future personal health records are a shared effort between patients, health care providers and software vendors. The author then describes six major personal health record implementations, ranging from paper based to Internet powered portals. Finally, he describes how the Indivo platform fits into the world of personal health records.

Mikhaila Burgess et al. investigate a vertical search portal to facilitate personalisation and specialization of online information searches. In particular, they address the two main challenges to using information: information overload and the quality of information. They describe a Personal Health Gateway, which assists people in finding the best available information. Further, they describe how this search portal can be integrated into a personal health record.

Jakob Valen addresses how research based development through computer technology is needed to optimise psychological psychiatric services. He proposes a solution to some of the deficiencies of today's status, in particular with respect to four main areas: assessment and monitoring, treatment matching and booking, provider supervision, and teaching systems for treatment providers.

Frode Laugen describes the PAT-C, which is a computerised tool for self-assessment of subjective symptoms. The PAT-C system has been developed and used for palliative care throughout the last five years. The system is now undergoing a further development, in particular with regard to the emergence of personal health records. The author describes some of the work that will be undertaken in order to create the PAT-C the application they envision.

Torstein Jensen et al. describe an implementation of a PHR system based on the openly available Indivo framework and discuss issues regarding adapting such a generic architecture to adhere to specific Norwegian conditions and EHR standards.

We would like to thank the authors and participants for their contributions to the symposium, without whom these proceedings would never have been possible.

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# Organisation

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