

Digitalisation supports health and wellbeing

Through digitalisation, services can be provided in completely new ways, and processes enhanced. Electronic services also encourage residents to independently maintain their functional capacity and health. Finland is one of the frontrunners in digital and electronic services.

Finland will utilise the potential of the digital era

Digitalisation is one way to support individuals in taking responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, and to provide services in a flexible manner to meet people's various needs. It also offers new opportunities to respond to the increasing service needs as the population ages and consequently requires more support for the promotion of health and wellbeing.

The foundation for utilising digitalisation are the client and patient data systems in electronic format, and the national Kanta services that bring these data systems together. The Kanta services make it possible

for a client's data to be available at any service point where he or she receives services. Today, all patient information is in electronic format.

For decades, Finland has been developing its legislation to support electronic healthcare and social welfare services, beginning with the Client Data Act and the Act on Electronic Prescriptions and culminating in the Act on Secondary Use of Health and Social Data in 2019, and a Genome Centre Act that is currently being prepared. The legislative amendments aim to support the controlled utilisation of digitalisation.

FINLAND – A COUNTRY WITH UNIQUE STRENGTHS



Unique national ID-number



National e-health & e-welfare service (Kanta)

1980s



Electronic patient data developed since the 1980s



Electronic-only prescription



Reliable, high-quality register and data



100% of patients records in electronic format

Kanta – a unique package of digital services

Kanta is an entity of digital services, which brings benefits for people, pharmacies and the social welfare and healthcare sector. Patient, social care and prescription data are gathered into a national data-bank. Professionals in healthcare and social welfare services save the client, patient and prescription data in the Kanta service. The information is then available nationally, no matter where in Finland the client uses the services.

The personal health record system is available for everyone. People can browse their own medical

records and prescriptions and save their living will or organ donation testament in the My Kanta Pages. Through Kanta, you can also send your certificates to the authorities. My Kanta has proven to be extremely popular. Almost a fifth of all Finns use the service every month.

The identity of each user is verified using strong electronic identification. The Kanta services will be expanded and become more versatile in compliance with clients' wishes and the development of legislation. The services are developed in cooperation with the users.



Finns are very active users of their own health data and they have adequate skills to use digital services. Data protection legislation that functions well combined with good practices provide a strong foundation for people to trust in the new opportunities that digitalisation brings.

Health data supporting people's health and wellbeing

Finland has comprehensive, high-quality information resources containing health and social data, providing information on health and welfare and the use of services. Health and social data can be used for the needs of knowledge management, research, development and innovation in a safe manner and in accordance with the criteria laid down by the General Data Protection Regulation. This is possible thanks to the Act on Secondary Use of Health and Social Data approved in spring 2019. The Act is among the first of its kind anywhere in Europe.

The new data permit authority, Findata, will grant data permits if data is needed from several data controllers. A centralised data permit system and a secure user environment for transferring information are currently under construction.

Knowledge management is one of the grounds for the secondary use of data. For the public, more effective utilisation of information will be reflected in services and treatments that function better.

Rethinking healthcare and pushing innovations

Reliable, high-quality registry data, well-functioning information systems, and enabling legislation all create opportunities for innovations and growing business activities in the health sector. Finland is accelerating the utilisation of artificial intelligence and robotics in welfare sector services, and removing obstacles to the development and use of technologies in the welfare sector. Practices and regional test platforms are being created for the adoption of new technologies.

National genome, biobank, cancer and neuro centres are currently under construction. The centres, operating on the 'one-stop shop' principle, will form a development environment around public stakeholders. The centres will support the safe use of data in healthcare and medical care and in preventing illnesses. The electronic information resources of the centres will serve both research and businesses in the sector.

Towards cooperation between digital health services

Finland is a pioneer in developing cross-border digital healthcare services in Europe. Finland and Estonia have taken the Kanta services' electronic prescriptions into use bilaterally, which is the first time this kind of cooperation has happened in Europe. The service is going to be extended to other European countries as well. At the same time, solutions for interoperable information services are being further developed in European cooperation.

Finland participates in developing common responsible operation models between EU countries in order to promote the safe movement and utilisation of data for a multiple range of uses. The objective is to enhance the potential of digitalisation in promoting health and welfare.

