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## European Project Promoting Personal Health System Interoperability Launches with Support from Continua Health Alliance, ETSI and IHE-Europe

*The initiative will feature regional stakeholder workshops and culminate in the delivery of recommendations to the European Commission*

**BEAVERTON, Ore. – March 1, 2010** – Continua Health Alliance, an international organization of leading health care and technology companies, the *European Telecommunications Standards Institute* (ETSI), responsible for standardization of ICT within Europe, and *Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise Europe* (IHE-Europe) today announced receipt of funding from the European Commission (EC) for a 12-month project called *Smart Personal Health*. *Smart Personal Health* aims to promote awareness and a deeper understanding of the need for interoperability among personal health systems (PHS), devices and other eHealth systems across Europe. Continua, ETSI and IHE-Europe are joined by project partners *empirica*, a European research institute with a broad understanding of political, business and socio-economic issues surrounding electronic health services and telecom applications, as well as *The Centre*, a European expert in public affairs and event organization.

The EC's *Communication on Telemedicine* called for action to support a wider understanding amongst key stakeholders of interoperability in the personal health space. The EC has funded the one-year *Smart Personal Health* support action to drive this process.

"*Smart Personal Health* will foster increased dialogue among those responsible for interoperability between personal health systems in Europe," said Charles Parker, executive director, Continua Health Alliance. "We at Continua are excited to be a part of this groundbreaking collaboration within the European Union. Interoperability will be crucial to achieve the full potential of connected health systems to increase health care access, enhance patient outcomes, improve population health and control costs."

Key activities of *Smart Personal Health* include three focused regional workshops and one central pan-European PHS Interoperability Conference. The project will culminate in a report to the European

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Commission highlighting the current status, concerns, barriers and viable incentives to accelerate the development and adoption of interoperable personal health systems. The report will include recommendations to the European Commission, national governments, stakeholder groups and the industry at large for promoting interoperability.

“ETSI is delighted to be a part of this important and timely project promoting interoperability among personal health systems,” stated Anthony Wiles, Director of the Centre for Testing and Interoperability at ETSI. “ETSI has a proven track record of achieving interoperability of telecom devices and is pleased to contribute that experience to health systems. What we do this year with the *Smart Personal Health* project will have a far-reaching positive impact on future generations and the connected health market in the European community.”

An ecosystem of personal health devices and applications, some converging from the consumer electronics world, is beginning to appear in the European market. These connected personal health solutions are being promoted by doctors and health insurers to help individuals monitor their health, fitness and overall wellness. However, their full benefit for the European Union will only be realized if these medical devices are interoperable, seamlessly transferring data regardless of manufacturer across a wide variety of networks.

“IHE-Europe with its experience in developing frameworks on interoperability of medical devices is very excited to contribute to the project and to deliver the very best direction and recommendation to the European Commission,” said Peter Kuenecke, Vendor CoChair IHE-Europe. “We understand the vital task at hand and support the interoperability of personal health care devices through all instances of the health system due to the vital role they play in the continuum of care.”

#### **About Continua**

Continua Health Alliance is a non-profit, open industry coalition of the finest health care and technology companies joining together in collaboration to improve the quality of personal health care. With more than 220 member companies around the world, Continua is dedicated to establishing a system of interoperable personal health solutions with the knowledge that extending those solutions into the home fosters independence, empowers individuals and provides the opportunity for truly personalized health and wellness management. For more information visit: [www.continuaalliance.org](http://www.continuaalliance.org).

#### **About ETSI**

ETSI produces globally-applicable standards for Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), including fixed, mobile, radio, converged, broadcast and internet technologies and is officially recognized by the European Union as a European Standards Organization. ETSI is an independent, not-for-profit association whose 717 member companies and organizations, drawn from 62 countries across 5 continents worldwide, participate directly in its work. For more information please visit: [www.etsi.org](http://www.etsi.org).

#### **About IHE**

IHE ([www.ihe-europe.net](http://www.ihe-europe.net)) is a global initiative, now in its eleventh year, that creates the framework for passing vital health information seamlessly – from application to application, system to system, and setting to setting – within and across healthcare enterprises. IHE brings together health information technology stakeholders to implement standards for communicating patient information efficiently throughout and among healthcare enterprises by developing a framework of interoperability. Because of

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its proven process of collaboration, demonstration and real world implementation of interoperable solutions, IHE is in a unique position to significantly accelerate the process for defining, testing, and implementing standards-based interoperability among electronic health record systems.

**Media Contacts:**

Ann Jansen  
Nereus for Continua  
+1 503-619-0685  
[press@continuaalliance.org](mailto:press@continuaalliance.org)

Paul Reid  
ETSI  
+33 4 92 94 42 19  
[paul.reid@etsi.org](mailto:paul.reid@etsi.org)

Marie-Astrid  
IHE-Europe  
+32 27 06 89 65  
[coordinator@ihe-europe.net](mailto:coordinator@ihe-europe.net)