

Power to the people of Norway

Digitization improves and
empowers healthcare



The need to share information

The Norwegian Directorate of eHealth serves Norway's population of just over five million citizens, coordinating their national healthcare records as well as developing and administrating digital solutions that will improve and simplify healthcare delivery.

Health records for Norway's citizens had traditionally been stored in several different administrative silos. This made it difficult and time consuming for healthcare professionals to gain access to a patient's vital information so they could easily provide timely and appropriate treatment. Additionally, the quality of this information was often varied and unreliable.¹ In fact, a survey of emergency admissions

showed that medication lists were missing for 39% of patients.² To overcome these challenges, the Directorate determined that a unified system capable of sharing consistent information between all healthcare providers and providing patients access to their own medical records was the correct path forward to improve the quality of care and the safety of Norway's citizens while empowering patients.

Both patients and physicians realize that a unified system helps us become more efficient and maybe most importantly, it helps us to improve the quality of care.

CHRISTINE BERGLAND
CEO, Directorate of Health

1. Bakken et al., Inadequate communication regarding patient medication in primary health care. The Journal of the Norwegian Medical Association no. 13-14, 2007; 127: 1766-9. Bakken et al, Mangelfull kommunikasjon om legemiddelbruk i primærhelsetjenesten, Tidsskr Nor Lægeforen nr. 13-14, 2007; 127:1766-9.
2. Frydenberg K., Brekke M., Communication regarding patient medication in referrals, admission charts and discharge reports. The Journal of the Norwegian Medical Association no. 9-10, 2011; 131: 942-5

When tech meets human ingenuity

An integrated digitized system

Based on our longstanding and collaborative relationship with the Directorate along with our experience working on other Norwegian projects, we designed and implemented a unified, digitized record management system crafted to meet the needs of Norway's population.

We applied an agile project plan to accelerate delivery and focus attention on critical system performance while at the same time help ensure data privacy. Beginning with a pilot project that eventually extended to cover 400,000 people in four municipalities, we designed a system to collect critical patient information and share it across the following audiences:



After-hours
emergency primary
care centers



Emergency
medical
services



Emergency Medical
Communication
Centers (EMCC)



General
practitioners'
offices

Following the success of the pilot, we collaborated with the Directorate on a national roll-out, drawing on our experience with similar projects in Singapore and Australia as well as in Norway driving similar implementations in other industries.

A valuable difference

A first of its kind for Norway

The new, unified, digital system has taken the Directorate an important step closer to seamless information sharing across Norway's national healthcare sector and represents the first national system for sharing clinical information across regions, healthcare businesses and care levels.

All Norwegian citizens now have access to the system and 6,000 healthcare personnel are currently using it. Usage statistics indicate healthcare personnel access the system every 30 seconds.

The system is proving invaluable in providing critical information to practitioners at time of treatment—information they might not otherwise have access too, such as in the case of an unresponsive patient. Patients now have full visibility into their own information, empowering them to take an active role in their own care by updating their records through a web-portal.

This initiative is laying the foundation for future developments such as “one citizen, one record” and for connected health and collaboration among all healthcare systems in general.

