

ALIAS: Alpine Hospital Networking for Improved Access to Telemedicine Services

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Abstract and objectives

The ALIAS project is a European project funded by the Alpine Space programme started in August 2009. ALIAS addresses medical services and information inadequacy to ensure health care provisions in the Alpine Space where telemedicine services are not widely exploited. Alpine space touristic vocation during some periods of the year makes its healthcare structures “periodically” inadequate to face a widened request of services supply. On the other hand, a major receptivity of those structures during the rest of the year is unnecessary due to the low density of Alpine space local residents. ALIAS is aimed at linking together a number of Alpine space hospitals enabling the creation of a Network shaping the ALIAS Virtual Hospital Network (VHN) for sharing medical information, adopting telemedicine and best clinical practices, to improve the efficiency of hospitals in that area.

Keywords:

Integrated advanced information management systems, Computerized medical records systems, Telemedicine, Health services accessibility

The ALIAS project

The first operational workpackage has precisely identified and designed the two expected services of the VHN. The first service called *information provision to health care professionals* allows a healthcare professional of any ALIAS hospital network to access information of a patient coming from any (other) ALIAS region, upon his/her consent. The second service called *advice querying* allows any healthcare professional of the ALIAS hospital network using telemedicine tools to require experts’ advice on a patient under treatment, upon his/her consent. Telecommunication tools will be implemented both in synchronous and asynchronous way.

In January 2010 started the workpackage for the development and deployment of tools required for the services supply, as well as the connection to existing local solutions. Another workpackage dedicated to the VHN creation and the training of future users started in July 2010 to prepare the eight par-

ticipating hospitals so that the operational pilot demonstration of the VHN can be achieved. The following step is the object of the Piloting and assessment workpackage running in 2011. Piloting and assessment is a crucial part of the project as it will evaluate the practical application of the VHN. The last workpackage will mainly contribute to reinforce the VHN, extending it up to additional providers of the cooperation area and foster the participation of additional Observers (public healthcare authorities).

In the ALIAS project, we will build a rapidly operational solution for the ALIAS objectives, and thus we have decided to take the diversity of the today operational platforms as a prerequisite. The care of mobile patients will be improved by the use of a service that allows information provision in a way that is not uniform: each platform provides the information in the form it is created at source.

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