



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

How to fight healthcare fraud and corruption in the digital age in Europe?

International conference gives the answer: solutions through cooperation

Healthcare fraud and corruption in the digital age does not stop at national borders. As such, there is an urgent need to tackle this challenge by close cross-border cooperation with technologies protecting our health information – in the interest of all European citizens. This is the conclusion of the 13th edition of the EHFCN International Conference which took place in Berlin, Germany, the 18th / 19th of November 2019.

Under the broad theme “*Bytes without borders: preventing and countering healthcare fraud and corruption in the digital age*” it gathered over 150 leading health policy experts from across the EU and beyond. The conference set the scene for forward-looking and solution-oriented discussions involving the [European Healthcare Fraud & Corruption Network \(EHFCN\)](#) and the [GKV-Spitzenverband, the German National Association of Statutory Health Insurance Funds](#). During the two days of the conference the participants reviewed their crucial role in this fight. They also debated the new risks and opportunities to prevent and counter healthcare fraud and corruption in today’s digital interconnected world.

Currently every European country tackles fraud and corruption on a national level. By contrast, fraudsters increasingly cross borders to defraud and transgress those limits. Access to information and technology are key tools in the fight against fraud and corruption through revolutionizing methods of corruption detection, prevention and analysis. However, with the benefits come new risks to the security and the privacy of our data. Therefore, it must be taken care of protecting the health information and the safety of the technologies in use.

These issues were discussed during the first day of the conference. In interactive, parallel breakout sessions speakers from more than 10 countries shared their best practices, in which they focused on practical tools and innovative solutions to find new ways to counter fraud, waste and corruption.

The second day of the conference - in a plenary session - innovative strategies and responses against fraud and corruption on European as well as international level were shared. It was concluded that, in order to progress, there is a need for more cooperation within the European Union and on an international level. This means pooling data and expertise, as well as protecting health information.

Dr Doris Pfeiffer, Chair of the Board, GKV-Spitzenverband (Germany), declares, *"Today EHealth, BigData or AI are part of a modern healthcare system in Europe. We need such innovative approaches not only for our healthcare systems but also for our fight against fraud and corruption. Only if we share our knowledge and exchange our best practical solutions – if we work in networked manner - we will succeed."*

Prof. Vassilis Plagianakos, President of the EHFCN, states *"This EHFCN international conference offered a space for debates and thought experiments around Europe's contemporary health challenges. The fight against fraud, corruption and waste is a major contribution to the financial sustainability of our healthcare systems and a contribution to the citizens - basic trust in the integrity of healthcare systems."*

The 2 final winners of the "EHFCN New Ways and Innovation Award 2019" presented their projects. The award honours new and innovative tools or techniques designed or set in place by EHFCN Members since 2017, in order to prevent and counter healthcare fraud, corruption and waste. The final Winners of 2019 are: *"The uncovering of a big fraud case using the data and tools of the new EOPYY medical devices and FSMP's Registry"* from EOPYY (Greece) and *"IGAS Antifraud Unit"* from IGAS (Portugal).

The full programme, including session content, speakers and more details is available [online](#).

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