A European Code of Practice for Telehealth Services Outcomes of the TeleSCoPE Project

Biocca L[1], Di Pasquale D[1], Lafortuna CL[2], Maiuri F[1], Padula M[1], Paraciani N[1], Scala PL[1], Tabozzi SA[2]

[1]ITC-CNR, [2]IBFM-CNR

www.telehealthcode.eu

Project Overview

TeleSCoPE: Telehealth Services Code of Practice for Europe

Funded by EC, Health Programme 2008-2013 Involves 13 partners in 7 member States

The latest version of the Code of Practice has been published in October 2013 (available at www.telehealthcode.eu/project/documents.html)

Aims and goals

– Development of a comprehensive European Code of Practice for telehealth services

– Changing health management

– Building trust among European citizens to promote eHealth adoption

– Providing a quality benchmark and a framework for service evaluation/certification, based on the Code

Methodology

TeleSCoPE definition of Telehealth

"Telehealth is the means by which technologies and related services that are concerned with health and wellbeing are accessed by people or provided for them at a distance"

User centred approach

- Choice and control to patients/service users

- Ensuring proper personal data management and user privacy

- Stress on services configuration and use

Methodology

Steps followed for Code development

1. Gathering of the evidence base
2. Development of Draft Code
3. Consultation on and validation of Draft Code
4. Updating/amending the Code based on 3
5. Final feedback gathering on updated version of the Code
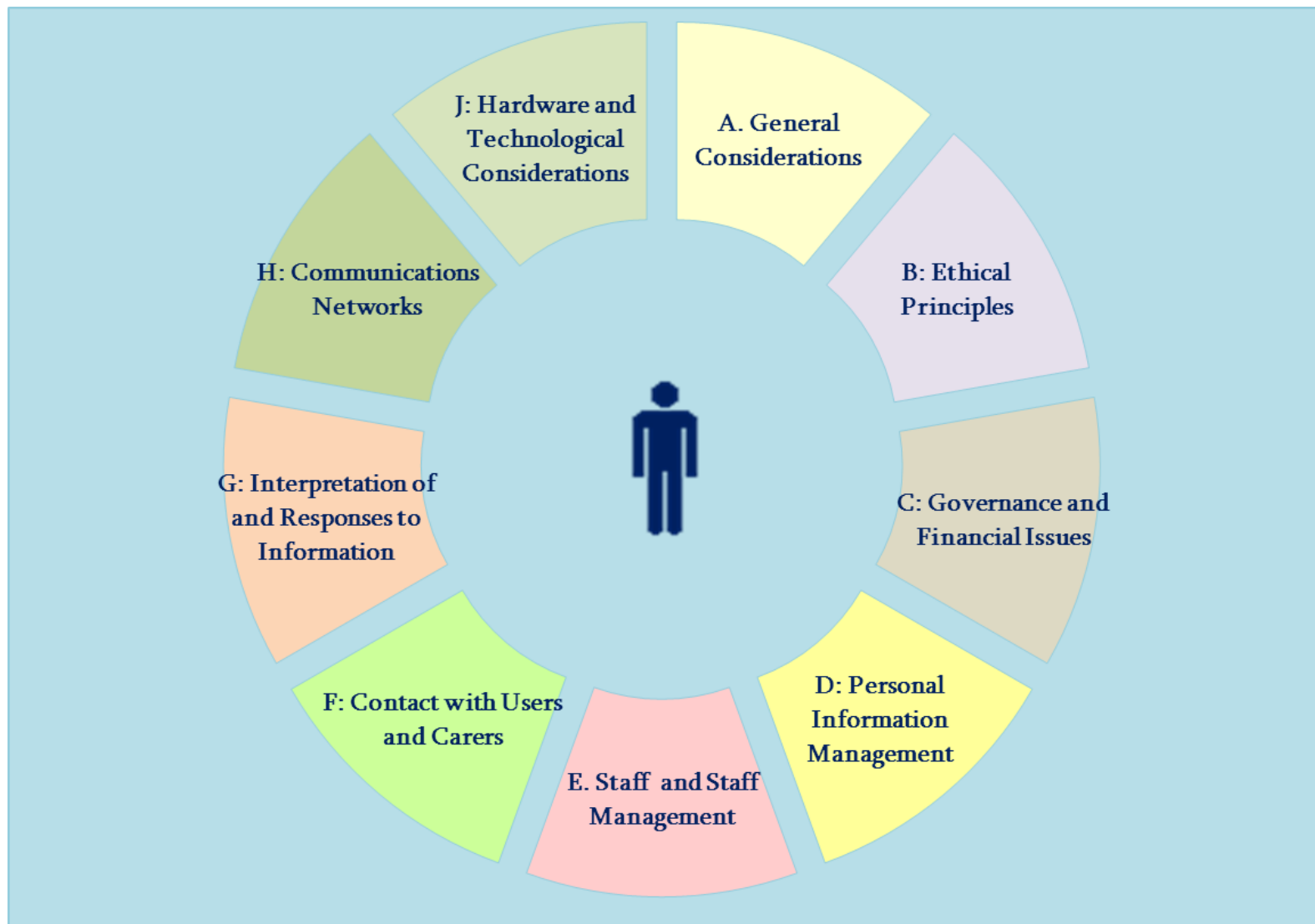6. Publishing the Code

Code Structure

- **54 clauses**

- **6 appendices – 5 of which offer further guidance**

Accreditation requires conformity with all applicable clauses:

minimum 47 (and 49 within 12 months) including declarations on services websites

Code Structure

Code Contents

Sections of the Code:

A. General Considerations

B. Ethical Principles

C. Governance and Financial Issues

D. Personal Information Management

E. Staff and Staff Management

F. Contact with Users and Carers

G. Interpretation of and Responses to Information

H. Communications Networks

J. Hardware and Technological Considerations

Code Contents

Sections of the Code:

A. General Considerations

B. Ethical Principles

C. Governance and Financial Issues

D. Personal Information Management

E. Staff and Staff Management

F. Contact

G. Interpretation of and Responses to Information

H. Communications Networks

J. Hardware

A1 Compliance with the Code
A2 Availability of the Code
A3 Service Website
A4 Compliance with Statutory Requirements
A5 Adjustments to Changes in Statutory Requirements
A6 Sustainability Policy
A7 Outcomes Focussed Appraisal
A8 Integrity of Service Locations
A9 Insurances

Code Contents

Sections of the Code:

A. General Considerations

B. Ethical Principles

C. Governance and Financial Issues

D. Personal Information Management

E. Staff and Staff Management

F. Contact with Users and Carers

G. Interpretation and Presentation of Information

H. Communications Networks

J. Hardware and Technological Considerations

B1 Mission Statement
B2 Conflicts of Interest
B3 Promotion and Marketing
B4 Providing Information for Users and Carers
B5 Taking Account of User and Carer Views

Code Contents

Sections of the Code:

A. General Considerations

B. Ethical Principles

C. Governance and Financial Issues

D. Personal Information Management

E. Staff and Staff Management

F. Contact with Users and Carers

G. Interpretation of and Responses to Information

H. Communication with Others

J. Hardware and Technological Considerations

C1 Governance Structure
C2 Business Continuity
C3 Risk Management Plan
C4 Maintaining Records
C5 Back Up Arrangements

Code Contents

Sections of the Code:

A. General Considerations

B. Ethical Principles

C. Governance and Financial Issues

D. Personal Information Management

E. Staff and Staff Management

F. Contact with Users and Carers

G. Interpretation of and Response to Information

H. Complaints and Redress

J. Hardware and Technological Considerations

D1 Protecting Personal Information

D2 Staff Access to Personal Information

D3 User and Carer Access to Personal Information

D4 Dealing with Personal Information after Service Cessation to the Individual and/or Carer

D5 Anonymisation and Further Usage of Personal Information

Code Contents

Sections of the Code:

A. General Considerations

B. Ethical Principles

C. Governance and Financial Issues

D. Personal Information Management

E. Staff and Staff Management

F. Contact with Users and Carers

G. Interactive Information Responses to Information

H. Communications Networks

J. Hardware and Technological Considerations

E1 Sufficiency of Staff for Service Provision

E2 Staff Recruitment Policies

E3 Providing for the Support and Well-being of Staff

E4 Safeguarding Staff when Travelling and Visiting

E5 Staff Training

E6 Whistle Blowing

Code Contents

Sections of the Code:

A. General Considerations

B. Ethical Perspectives

C. Governance and ethical issues

D. Personal Plans, Monitoring and Management

E. Staff and Staff Management

F. Contact with Users and Carers

F1 Agreements with Users and Carers

F2 In-Person Visits

F3 Tele-consultation (via Video)

F4 Guidance and Training for Users and Carers

F5 Development of Personal Plans with Users and Carers

F6 Prompts to Users and Carers with regard to Service Needs

G. Interpretation of and Responses to Information

H. Communications Networks

J. Hardware and Technological Considerations

Code Contents

Sections of the Code:

A. General Principles

B. Ethical Principles

C. Governance and Risk Management

D. Personal Information Management

E. Staff Recruitment and Management

F7 Service Discontinuation to Individual Users and Carers by Provider

F8 Survey of User and Carer Views of and Satisfaction with Service

F9 Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions

F10 User and Carer Fault Reporting

F11 User and Carer Changes to Network Supplier

F12 Provider Changes to Network Supplier   F13 Abuse

F. Contact with Users and Carers

G. Interpretation of and Responses to Information

H. Communications Networks

J. Hardware and Technological Considerations

Code Contents

Sections of the Code:

A. General Considerations

B. Ethical Principles

C. Governance and Management

D. Personal Information Management

E. Staff and Staff Management

F. Contact with Users and Carers

G. Interpretation of and Responses to Information

G1 Procedures and Protocols within Personal Plans
G2 Responding to Information Gathered through Remote Monitoring

H. Communications Networks

J. Hardware and Technological Considerations

Code Contents

Sections of the Code:

A. General Considerations

B. Ethical Principles

C. Governance and Financial Issues

D. Personal Information Management

E. Staff and Staff Management

F. Contact with Users and Carers

G. Interpretation of and Responses to Information

H. Communications Networks

J. Hardware and Technological Considerations

H1 Agreements Between Services and Telecommunications Providers

H2 Monitoring of the Communications Networks

Code Contents

Sections of the Code:

A. General Considerations
B. Ethical Principles
C. Governance and related issues
D. Personal Information Management
E. Staff and Staff Management
F. Contact Centre Management
G. Interpretation of and Responses to Information
H. Communications Networks

J1 Fitness of Technologies/Equipment and Related Software for the Purpose of the Service
J2 Database of Technologies/Equipment
J3 Equipment Recall, Removal and Disconnection Procedures
J4 Protection and Safe-keeping of Technologies/Equipment
J5 Installation, Programming and Demonstrating of Technologies/Equipment
J6 Maintenance, Servicing, Repair and Replacement of Technologies/Equipment
J7 Recovery, Recycling and Re-Use of Technologies/Equipment

J. Hardware and Technological Considerations

Code Consultation and Validation

In the consultation process the ACCEPTABILITY and SUITABILITY of the different clauses included in the Draft Code were evaluated by:
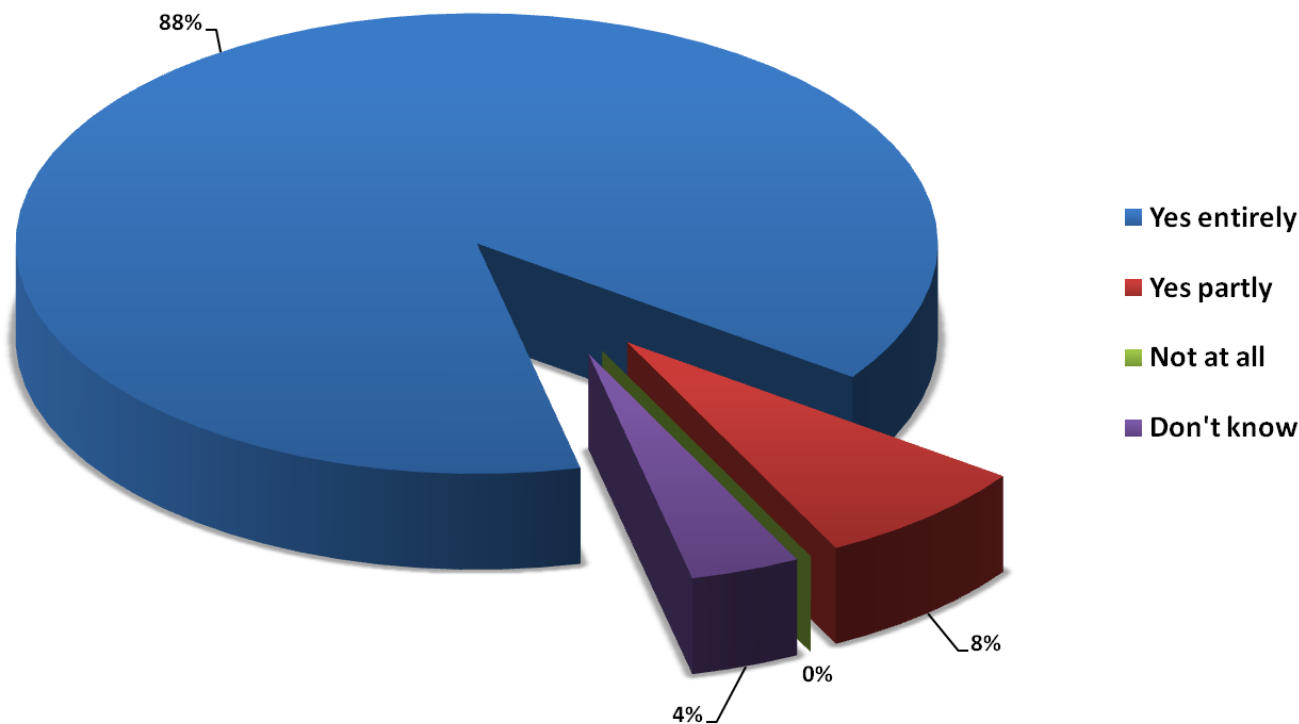
Telehealth service providers   (41% of respondents)
User/Carers organizations   (14%)
Government/Regulatory bodies   (14%)
Others (Research,Academia)   (31%)

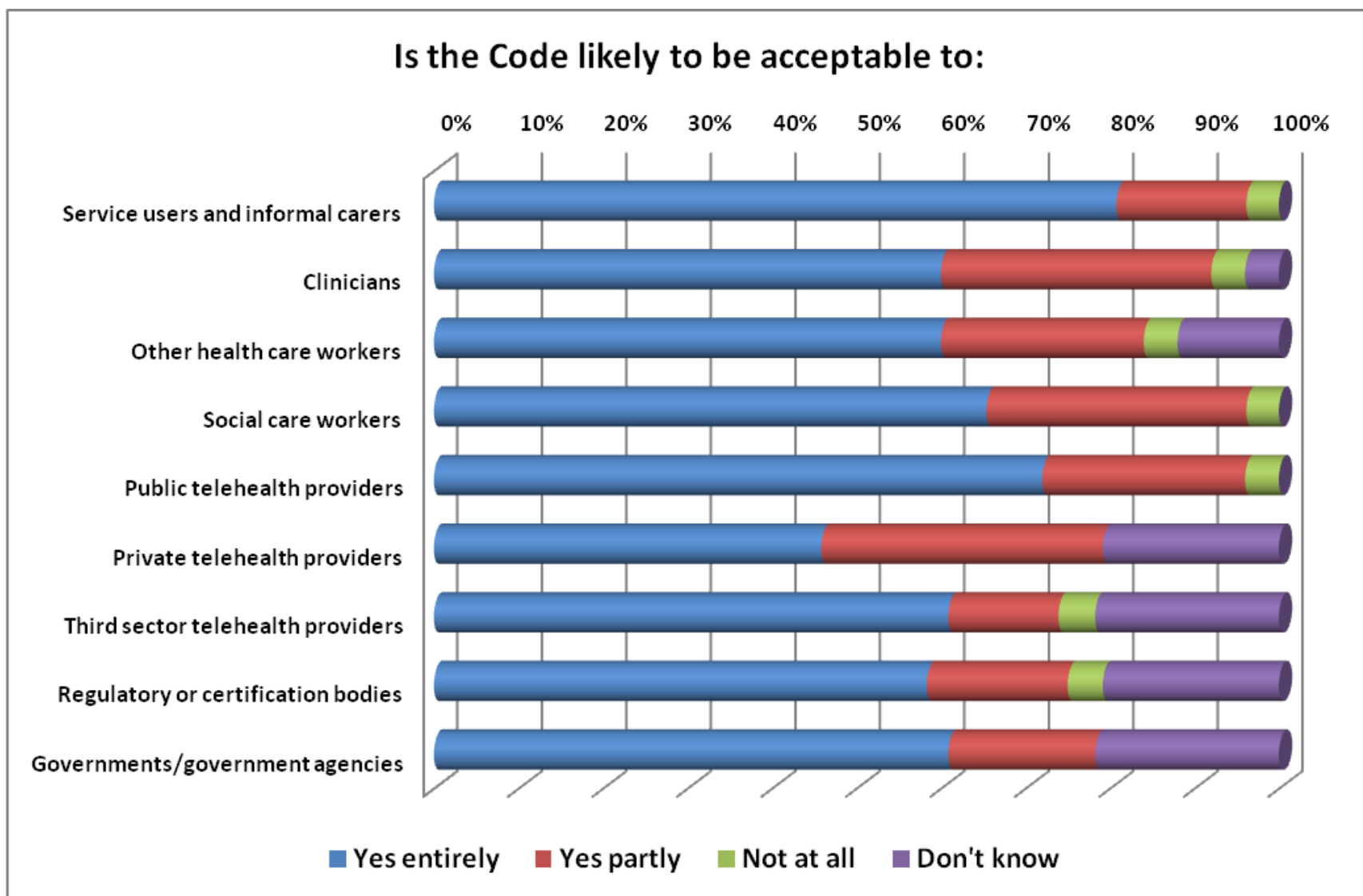**The draft Code has been validated by 15 services in 4 EU countries:**

Belgium   *(4 services)*
Hungary   *(4 services)*
Italy   *(4 services)*
United Kindom   *(3 services)*

Results of Consultation

Q1 - Is this type of Code needed for telehealth services?

- 88%
- 8%
- 0%
- 4%

Legend:
- Yes entirely
- Yes partly
- Not at all
- Don't know

Results of Consultation

Is the Code likely to be acceptable to:

Assessment Framework

Framework to assess telehealth services against Code requirements currently under development.

Expected release date: May 16th 2014.

The framework is the outcome of collaborative work between the Telescope Partnership and DNV Healthcare (dnvgl.com/healthcare).

Assessment Framework

Assessment and inspections cycle

1. Year Zero (now) and Year Four: Foundation Assessment
2. Year One: Interim Review
3. Year Two: On-Site Review
4. Year Three: Interim Review

Inspections undertaken by qualified inspectors and auditors

Detailed procedures currently under development with Det Norske Veritas (DNV Healthcare)

What Next?

- We have a queue of telehealth services who want to be accredited
- Arrangements are in place for the training of inspectors
- First accreditations in May/June

- Telehealth services are invited to be assessed / seek accreditation
- Government and regulatory bodies are being invited to endorse it
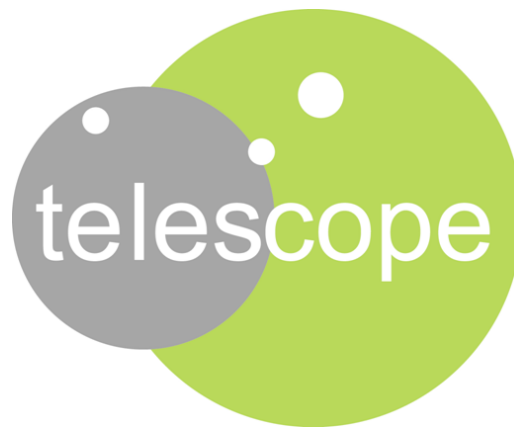
Take-home messages

1. **Theoretical**:

    the European Code of Practice for Telehealth Services aims to promote a more holistic approach to telehealth provision.

2. **Pragmatic**:

    the framework to assess telehealth services against Code is to be presented in the next monts…

                                              … stay tuned!

Thank you for your attention!

Davide Di Pasquale

CNR – Istituto per le Tecnologie della Costruzione
dipasquale@itc.cnr.it