

Digital transformation changes healthcare in Poland

Interview with Dr. MARCIN WĘGRZYŃIAK, a health expert at Pentacomp Systemy Informatyczne SA



Rynek Zdrowia: - *What is your opinion about the impact of the pandemic on the digitization of healthcare? Has the current situation stopped this process, or has it done just the opposite?*

Marcin Węgrzyński: - The second wave of the pandemic is once again digitizing the Polish healthcare in an accelerated manner. Most medical consultations take place by phone or online. In addition, commercial insurers contract teleconsultation services with medical facilities in large quantities. Due to the increased demand, the offer of IT tools for remote visits intended for medical facilities and private doctor's offices has also increased significantly. It is expected that this offer will be expanded even further.

- *Suppose that a medical entity wants to implement a new IT system. The market offer is growing, which is good on the one hand, but may make the selection difficult on the other hand. What should medical facility managers pay particular attention to?*

- Medical services are nowadays provided not only by medical entities. What is interesting is the activity of insurance companies, which have a growing offer of medical services and cooperate with a dispersed network of medical facilities. In this case, a set of electronic services for patients can give them a competitive advantage in terms of customer service quality. The basic electronic services include remote registration for a visit and access to medical data and documents from the patient's portal or a mobile application. What is important overall is that an IT tool should be comprehensive and keep pace with changes in central systems.

It should ensure ongoing access to patients' medical histories and enable electronic prescriptions, electronic referrals, and electronic sick notes. What is also important is an ability to retrieve medical records, such as prescription histories, from other medical facilities.

- *Clinics definitely need holistic, modern solutions. But what if a facility, a chain of clinics, or an insurer already has an IT system? Does it need to be replaced or is there any other solution?*

- The progressive digitization of healthcare requires some changes in the systems used by medical entities, but definitely does not force their replacement. The market offer includes ready-made tools to integrate multiple facilities and to communicate with central solutions. Pentacomp has a number of proven solutions for both service providers and software companies. Our tools use the HL7 and IHE international integration standards, which are widely accepted in Poland, and enable, among other things, a simple connection to the P1 system and the Social Security Institution's system. Thanks to the ready-made connectors to the electronic prescription system, the electronic referral system, the primary healthcare provider selection declarations (hardly anyone knows that patients already have the possibility to submit the declarations via the Patient Internet Account), and the electronic sick note system, a comprehensive tool can be created from almost every system used by clinics. Thanks to such "integration suites," it is much easier and cheaper to standardize medical software used in clinic chains and to adapt it to new regulations.

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