



## PRESS RELEASE

### WORKSHOP ON

### «Implementation of Digital Tools for Oncological Quality of Care - Barriers and Facilitators»

On Friday 5 April 2024, the Cancer Guidance Center-Kapa3 organized a workshop on "*Implementation of Digital Tools for Oncological Quality of Care - Barriers and Facilitators*" at the Mediterranean Palace in Thessaloniki, with live and online participation.

The **Deputy Minister of Health, Marios Themistocleous**, welcomed the opening of the workshop, highlighting the difficulty of operational health plans to reach the targeted patients, which can be addressed by the use of digital technology. In addition, he mentioned future plans to upgrade digital tools.

Welcoming remarks were made by, **Archimandrite Athenagoras Loukataris**, Holy Metropolis of Neapolis - Stavropolis, "Faros tou Kosmou" Center for the Protection of Minors and Youth Support, **Marianna Varadini**, Lawyer - Scientific Associate of the Private Office of the Ministry of Interior, Sector Macedonia and Thrace, on behalf of Minister Konstantinidis, **Melina Dermendzopoulou**, Vice-Regional Head of Health & Social Solidarity Region of Central Macedonia, **Efthimios Hadjitheoklitos**, Deputy Mayor of Social Policy, Solidarity and Welfare, as well as **Hatzidimitriou Maria**, Vice President of the Institute of Microbiology and Immunology, Professor of Microbiology & Immunology at IHU.

During the first round table of the conference, entitled "*Innovation - Society: Is there a vision of realizing a "digital transformation" with a focus on people? What is the role of Civil Society Organizations?*", the presenter Hatzioannidou Maria Nefeli - Member of the State Parliament of New Democracy, Founder of "YPEROCHES GYNAIKES", emphasized the demand for innovation in health with a focus on people. The digitalization of health and digital transformation tends to change the identity of man, however we are still in the early stages of digitization of health services.

The discussion was attended by representatives of Civil Society (**Vaso Rafaella Vakouftsi**, President of the Greek Patients Association, **Eleni Deliopoulou**, Head of Art and Culture, ELLOK, **Theopisti Krystallidou** - President WinCancer, **Maria Sidiropoulou**, Vice President of the Association of Friends of Theagenio Hospital, **Kiki Tsiranidou** - President of the "Imeroessa", Panhellenic Association for the Support of People with Obesity, **Spyridon**



**Zorbas**, President of the "EPIONI", Greek Caregivers Network, **Bista Evangelis** - Phd(c), Mba,MSc,BSc, Manager of Development and Operations - Co-founder Kapa3), who, in turn, referred to the use of digital health tools and the importance of digital transformation, highlighting both the multiple barriers that currently overwhelm health services and the improvement of the patient's daily life. Finally, **Stelios Kympuropoulos**, Member of the European Parliament of New Democracy, commented that digital technology should be based on diversity and inclusion, so that everyone has equal access to it.

At the beginning of the second round table on "**Digital health tools: Is the patient at the center?**", **Maria Karagiannidou** presented the positive features of the digitalisation of health services for the benefit of patients. Patients and patient caregivers participated in this panel, (**Chrysa Karakana**, Psychologist - Caregiver of a Cancer Patient, **Aristea Archodidou**, Biomedical Engineer, Biological Engineer, Medical Doctor, Patient - Patient Care Information, Technology Engineer, Health Policy and Health Service Planning (MSc), Patient, **Konstantina Marinou**, Freelance, Patient, **Nena Anestopoulou**, Gymnastics, Patient), who shared their own personal experience with both cancer and the use of digital tools, emphasizing the need for organized interventions by the state. Commentators of the panel are **Emmanuel Smyrnakis**, Associate Professor of Primary Health Care - Medical Education, Laboratory of Primary Health Care, General Medicine and Health Services Research - Department of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and **Diomidis Antoniadis** MD, MSc, PhD, Attending Psychiatrist Ps.N.Th., Doctor of Psycho-oncology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Post-Doc researcher at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Medical School, Scientific Head of R.I. Psycho-oncology PS.N.TH., who among others mentioned the development of accessible digital health applications, and psychometric tools for oncology patients, respectively.

The workshop continued with the presentation of the **E-Health4Cancer** project, its aims and objectives, the main actions and results of the project by **Vaia Pantazi**, Sociologist of Kapa3, followed by the presentation of the **Systematic Literature Review** by **Camilla Ancona** - Ph.D. in Technology, Innovation and Management, Project Coordinator/ UNINA, analyzing the main findings on digital tools for cancer at EU level.

The second round of the conference was opened by the presentation of the "**Good Practices Guide**" by **Lars Münter** - Komiteen for Sundhedsoplysning, Executive Horizon Advisor, Director of international projects unit/ Enhedscef, with the main conclusions of the guide that fragmentation leads to confusion, sustainability means progress and digital tools must be both functional and easily accessible.

During the next round table entitled "**Digital Health: Infrastructures, Challenges for a Rational Transition. Bright Examples!**", Natsiavas Pantelis - Researcher C, Institute of Applied Life Sciences, National Centre for Research and Technological Development, highlighted the

need for a patient-centered approach and innovation with a focus on prevention and care delivery by telemedicine, as well as the need to reduce inequalities in cancer care delivery across the EU.

The panelists were **Stergiani Spyrou**, Head of the Informatics Department of the 3rd YPE, **Christos Frantzidis** - Dr., Senior Lecturer - School of Computer Science, College of Health and Science - big data cancer, and **Dr. Dimitra Dionysiou**, Head of Health Technologies Department, I-SENSE Group, Institute of Communication and Computer Systems, National Technical University of Athens, who in turn spoke about digital health tools, mentioning specific examples such as eCAN, ONCOSCREEN & ONCODIR, as well as a new application called CUTE.

The round tables concluded with the last panel entitled "***The Digital Age meets cancer care: the health professional's approach***", where Maria Lavdanitis - Professor, Chair of the Department of Nursing, International Hellenic University, highlighted the need to educate health professionals and nurses with a patient-centered approach.

The participants of this roundtable, **Christos Triantafyllou**, Nurse, MSCE, PhD (c), Project Officer Quality of Care, WHO Athens Office on Quality of Care and Patient Safety, **Dr Anastasios Boutis** Clinical Director, Specialist Pathological Oncologist, C' Department of Clinical Oncology and Chemotherapy, Theagenio Hospital, **George Vagos**, Obstetrician and Gynaecologist - Attending physician at the General Hospital of Arta, **Aikaterini Stravoravdis**, Psychologist MSc of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Associate of the Clinical Research Unit, Papageorgiou Hospital, Department of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, through their individual qualities, spoke respectively about: health inequalities, shortcomings in the implementation of digital tools and the importance of patient participation in the design processes of such tools.

With a strong and powerful message, **Evaggeli Bista** closed the conference, highlighting that oncology care services face challenges due to the increasing number of cancer survivors as well as the fragmentation of care. Digital platforms are a potential tool for delivering patient-centered care, which despite the barriers and challenges, can be strongly related to improving the quality of health and patient care.

The conference was held in the framework of the ***E-Health4Cancer*** project, co-funded by the European Union, as well as in collaboration with the Research Laboratory "Adult Cancer Care" of the Nursing Department of the International Hellenic University of Greece, Under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior - Sector of Macedonia and Thrace, the Region of Central Macedonia, the Municipality of Thessaloniki, the 4th Health Region of Greece, the International Hellenic University, the HeSMO, the Pharmaceutical Association of Thessaloniki, the Greek Patients Association and the ELL.O.K..