

# Project Highlights: Estonian e-Prescription Software Development

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# e-Prescription

The new e-Prescription system was designed as a centralized and paperless system to be used by all doctors, patients, and pharmacies. The central e-Prescription system was developed by the Estonian state in cooperation with Helmes.

## Launching the e-Prescription System

### Project highlights

Many countries have attempted e-Prescription projects before Estonia and have spent countless hours on establishing an e-Prescription system. Estonia launched its e-Prescription service after three years of development and a software development budget of only 300,000 Euros.

The overall project lasted for five years, including all the preparations necessary to issue prescriptions digitally.

The e-Prescription system has improved the openness and transparency in the authorization of medicine, and more importantly, opened a whole new way for future developments which aim to share information and statistics and improve the medical care and also the quality of decision making among policy makers.

### Solution highlights

e-Prescription is understood as the process of the electronic transfer of a prescription by a health-care provider to a pharmacy for retrieval of the drug by the patient.

The central e-Prescription system enables medical personnel and pharmacies to monitor and manage the issuing of prescriptions. All hospitals and pharmacies in the nation are connected to the system.

### Main benefits of e-Prescription

The e-Prescription project makes the health-care system environmentally friendlier. Since the data communications are digitized, it significantly reduces paper usage throughout the health-care sector.

With approximately 8 million prescriptions issued each year, the e-Prescription solution enables the saving of a significant amount of time for all parties.

This frees up time for both the patient and the doctor and reduces administrative strain on the hospital.

The Health Insurance Fund is provided with fast and accurate reporting. From the authorities' perspective, this means less paperwork, more time for individual patients, more reliable health statistics, better monitoring of compliance.

### Results

Just 15 months after launch, 84 percent of prescriptions are issued digitally. More than 95 percent of pharmacies are ready to process e-Prescriptions. According to a survey of citizens' satisfaction with health and health care in Estonia, 97 percent of users of digital prescriptions are satisfied with the service.

### Two awards

The e-Prescription system ranked first in the category of e-health and environment projects at an e-service contest, which included 71 new Estonian e-solutions. The e-Prescription service is thus representing Estonian e-services at the World Summit Awards.

The Estonian Health Insurance Fund also received a quality innovation award in 2011 in the 'public sector organizations' category for the creation and implementation of the Estonian e-Prescription system. The Quality Innovation Awards competition is open to the participation of Estonian, Finnish, and Swedish organizations.