

## Health informatics in Finland and internationally

Health informatics is an international and multidisciplinary field which studies and develops methods and systems for health and welfare services and increasingly also for individual wellbeing. Recently, public debate has been dominated by usability challenges of legacy systems as well as skyrocketing price estimates of new systems. Daily operating solutions which serve the needs of users do not gather similar press visibility, nor do those numerous initiatives for research and development which are building groundwork for future solutions.

Independent information from research is a central success factor in the development of solutions which serve the needs of clients as well as service providers. Although many areas of computer science and medicine are universal, the specification and deployment of effective solutions always requires ability to take local and national specifics into account. These specifics are manifested in legislation, service system as well as operational models and processes in wellbeing services. In many areas such as health technology assessment and evaluation, personal and ubiquitous technology, information management for social services and integration of services and information systems Finnish research and development work is on a good international level. In other areas such as novel informatics support for clinical research and translational medical informatics there are not so many Finnish research activities manifested through publications. In research and its funding it is important to support the further development of existing strengths as well as to ensure competitiveness in new key areas. This requires collaboration between funding institutions as well as ability and courage to observe the long term wellbeing trends in a multidisciplinary way.

In 2013, the 16th research days of social and health informatics and this number of the Finnish Journal of eHealth and eWelfare includes a representative cross-section of research results and timely keynotes. Even though scientific knowledge is inherently international, it is important to publish results also on local level. At the age of open internet publishing, this does not prevent outreach to international audience. This is also indicated by the fact that about third of papers on the research days is written in English.

The evaluation process for research days and the journal was performed using a double-blind method. Each submission received freeform feedback and rating in 11 categories from at least two reviewers. In addition, the reviewers were asked to suggest papers for presentation in a joint session with national industry conference (Terveydenhuollon atk-päivät). Based on ratings, the best third of papers were reviewed by two more reviewers. The best paper was thus selected based on ratings from four reviewers. The editors gratefully acknowledge the efforts of Pirkko Nykänen, Kauko Hartikainen, Pia Järvinen-Hiekkänen, Hannele Hyppönen, Ritva Karjalainen-Jurvelin and Maarit Laaksonen who acted as reviewers.

The best paper award in 2013 was granted to "Sosiaalihuollon asiakastietomalli" (Client data model of social welfare) by Erja Ailio and Jarmo Kärki.

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