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# New Year Newsletter 2024



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## The HcH New Year Letter 2024

Healthcare Heads wishes you a happy, healthy, and successful new year!

In 2024 we expect important changes in the German healthcare system, especially new developments in the proposed changes of the federal government (2023 saw already seven healthcare bills and twenty regulations by the Healthcare Ministry).

The Healthcare Ministry has already announced various reforms concerning first responders, urgent care, the establishment of an agency for digitalization, and a bill to curb bureaucracy. Most of all we are expecting the first draft of the healthcare system reform, a reform that should have come into effect January 1st, 2024, already. However, the hospital transparency bill needs to be passed before this and it is still stuck in the conciliation committee. The whole situation is rather complicated and reliable information is not available yet.

So, what has 2024 in store for Medtech and pharmaceutical companies in Germany?

## We see two major driving forces in 2024

We cannot predict the future naturally, but, looking back on the recent years we have identified two major driving forces, which will determine this year. Even without knowing the exact details yet, companies can already take measures to prepare for the challenges ahead.

### Major driving force Healthcare reform

One of the defining factors in the upcoming year remains the impending overhaul of the German healthcare system. In the meantime, the reality of our life changes rapidly. A multitude of crises – pandemics, wars, environmental changes – challenge our society and economy. Our economic power is the foundation of our standard of living and the basis of our socialized healthcare system. This system has evolved over more than a century and it is high time to revalue the historically grown structure and adapt it to the current and future needs.

We are in dire need of a fundamental reform of the German healthcare system - not only a reform of the hospital finance system. However, the “revolution” Health Minister Carl Lauterbach promised will create more chaos, instead of the addressing the pressing problems. Neither the DRG- reimbursement system will change, nor will there be improvements for demand-driven or local healthcare. And obviously the “revolution” will not start January 1st, 2024, as promised.

Our analyses prove that the tool of “partial pre-reimbursement” which guarantees hospitals 60% of their yearly budget in advance, will not lessen the financial burden on hospitals but instead increase the pressure on care to be most of all financially advantageous. So, ultimately this proposed attempt of a much-needed hospital finance reform will destroy the demand-driven care, instead of improving it. On top of it all Minister Lauterbach plans to conquer the increasing bureaucracy by implementing yet another bill to decrease bureaucracy - no comment.

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## Major driving force digitalization

The second major force in 2024 will be digitalization. AI, interconnectivity, the “Internet of Things” are the big issues now. The industrial revolution continues. Version 1.0 started back in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century with the invention of the steam engine, followed by version 2.0, the industrial use of electricity with Henry Ford in 1913, and version 3.0 in the 70th and 80th of the last century, which saw the introduction of computers. Now we have arrived at version 4.0 with an increasingly digitally and globally connected world, virtual enhanced reality, AI, and an ubiquitous network. This industrial revolution 4.0 is said to be taking place the ten years between 2020 and 2030. So, we are in the midst of it. Exciting!

The German health care system operates in 2024 in the state between crisis and innovation and the situation is complex to say the least. But how should companies of the Medtech and pharmaceutical industry position themselves best? How to not miss one of the suddenly arising chances?

Since Darwin we know, adaptation is the key to survival and thriving. Hence, the question is not if digital medical technology, AI, big data, and the interconnection of care systems will improve healthcare. The question is rather when are digital technologies like robotic assisted surgery, telemedicine, and digital data management are going to improve the healthcare system? When is the right time for service providers to make the switch?

The answer is: Now! We know that innovative technologies and digitalization are not the problem but the answer. 2024 offers a unique opportunity to launch projects that will prove that innovation is the key element.

This is the time to invest in new relationships. Everybody is looking for solutions, insurance companies and lawmakers are more open to support innovative projects. While those parties and the care providers themselves often still have reservations against digitalization, the industry as long since recognized the value of data itself. Information which was hitherto not available or only very tedious to compile, is now accessible to precisely test care models, validate, and adjust them. This is new and it creates many advantageous possibilities. It is a unique chance to support innovative medical products and technologies' way into the German and European market.

## Digitalization with the HcH Data Platform

For this reason, Healthcare Heads and our partners have been working for some years now on an innovative data processing platform, through which we will be able to support the various care models, all within privacy regulations. This step will help greatly to secure market access for innovative medical technology.

Also, we see this trend not only in Germany but in varying degrees globally. The early investment in the digitalization of healthcare data to utilize to drive care projects is expedient and effective for all involved parties, the industry not the least of them.

## HcH is happy to support you with your individual strategy

I am Sven Sauermann, the co-founder and of the CEOs of the consulting agency Healthcare Heads. We are truly experts in what we do: help you to successfully establish your technology and products in the German healthcare market by developing a strategy unique to your needs. And we will also support you in the effective implementation.

Let's work together to secure patients' access to innovative health care technologies in the future.

It is in this spirit we from Healthcare Heads wish you a healthy and successful 2024.