

## **4. European Health Forum Gastein**

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### **Health in the Information Age – Health Technology and Policy Formulation**

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Rolf Engelbrecht from the European Federation of Medical Informatics summarised in his speech “Health in the Information Age – Health Technology and Policy Formulation” held on September 28<sup>th</sup> the results of the day before. He concentrated on the central problems arising from the complexity of the topic.

Communication and information for patients and doctors are, according to Engelbrecht, the most important aspects of the new technologised medicine. The public should be enabled to care for its health more actively. People should be drawn together in order to exchange experiences and to intensify the contact between doctors and patients. All of these aims should be realised through electronic ways, i.e. the new instrument of the doctors is the Internet.

Before these ideas can be realised, there are many questions to answer, i.e.: How can the safety of data be guaranteed?, How is the correctness of information to be guaranteed?, Are the sources reliable and trustworthy at all?,...

Apart from that, procedures for the global collaboration still have to be found. The adequate technology for electronic patient's data is missing. The possibility of the electronic signature should be developed further and different legal questions still have to be answered.

It is the aim of Rolf Engelbrecht to go through the suggestions of last year, to compare them to currently occurred problems and to develop a “paneuropean” strategy, as Mr Engelbrecht calls it. He intends to deal with the more difficult possibilities in the developing countries, to. With one last claim: “Health has to be focussed on action and the European Union should coordinate and organise the national health matters”, Rolf Engelbrecht finished his speech.