



HACKING HEALTHCARE

Hacking Healthcare - Weekly Blog



TLP:WHITE

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This week, Health-ISAC®'s Hacking Healthcare® examines new AI developments within the EU. Specifically, we look at how the European Commission intends to push forward AI adoption within the health sector as outlined in the new Apply AI Strategy. We then explore some of the larger security themes in the analysis portion.

Welcome back to Hacking Healthcare®.

New EU Developments to Increase AI Usage in Healthcare

Efforts to develop AI standards and regulations to facilitate the deployment of AI products and services continues apace within the EU, and October saw new developments for the health sector.

In early October, the European Commission published their Apply AI Strategy.^[i] Described as “the EU’s overarching Artificial Intelligence (AI) sectoral strategy,” the document “is designed to enhance the competitiveness of strategic sectors and strengthen the EU’s technological sovereignty” and “aims to boost AI adoption and innovation across Europe.”^[ii] Importantly, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices all appear to be covered to some degree as described in section 2.1.

The Apply AI Strategy is split into three sections: sectoral flagships, cross-cutting challenges, and a governance mechanism. Among the most interesting of these for the health sector are the flagship projects described in some detail within the strategy itself and its accompanying annex.^[iii], ^[iv] They include “propos[ing] appropriate actions to streamline and enable quicker market entry of medical devices without compromising safety” and “establish[ing] a European network of AI-powered advanced screening centre[s] to accelerate the introduction of innovative tools for prevention and diagnosis making in healthcare facilities and bringing healthcare services to underserved areas.”^[v]

As part of these flagship initiatives, on October 21, the European Commission published an article detailing the launch of COMPASS-AI, a new effort to increase the use of AI in healthcare.^[vi] With a focus on cancer care and healthcare in remote areas, the intention is “to promote the responsible and effective integration of AI into clinical settings.”^[vii]

Within the broader policy context, the European Commission has also stated that efforts under the Apply AI Strategy will complement workstreams related to the AI Continent Action Plan that was published in April earlier this year and will rely on the AI Act and existing medical device regulations to provide a clear framework for the safe deployment of AI in healthcare.^[viii], ^[ix], ^[x]

Action & Analysis

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^[i] <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/apply-ai>

^[ii] <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/apply-ai>

^[iii] Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council: Apply AI Strategy. European Commission (pg. 2-4)

^[iv] Annexes to the Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council: Apply AI Strategy. European Commission (pg. 3)

^[v] Annexes to the Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council: Apply AI Strategy. European Commission (pg. 3)

^[vi] <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-launches-flagship-initiative-increase-use-ai-healthcare>

^[vii] <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-launches-flagship-initiative-increase-use-ai-healthcare>

[viii] <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/apply-ai>
 [ix] <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/ai-continent-action-plan>
 [x] <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/artificial-intelligence-health>
 [xi] <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/artificial-intelligence-health>
 [xii] <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/state-of-the-act-eu-ai-act-3732095/>
 [xiii] <https://www.euractiv.com/news/fast-tracking-of-eu-ai-act-standards-writing-leads-to-revolt/>
 [xiv] <https://health-isac.org/health-isac-hacking-healthcare-11-7-2024/>
 [xv] Annexes to the Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council: Apply AI Strategy. European Commission (pg. 3)
 [xvi] Annexes to the Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council: Apply AI Strategy. European Commission (pg. 3)
 [xvii] <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-launches-flagship-initiative-increase-use-ai-healthcare>

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Hacking Healthcare

Hacking Healthcare is co-written by John Banghart and Tim McGiff.

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