



**DigiCare4You**

## Press Release

**Brussels, 29/5/2024** – Representatives from the 16 international, multidisciplinary DigiCare4You consortium partners gathered in Pisa, Italy on May 15-16 2024, for the project's fifth consortium meeting. DigiCare4You partners reviewed the progress achieved in each work package throughout the second reporting period spanning from October 1, 2022 until March 31, 2024 and discussed next steps for the project.

### **Current state of the project**

Participant screening and recruitment has been successfully completed in all four implementation countries - Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Spain. These followed a two-step procedure to identify parents and caregivers living with, or at risk of, diabetes and hypertension (HTN). Individuals identified with prediabetes or Type 2 Diabetes (T2D) were then invited to join a 24-month long intervention. This combines elements of self-management and remote monitoring through mobile apps along with face-to-face counselling sessions with healthcare professionals (HCPs).

Participants have now undergone baseline measurements and regular face-to-face counselling sessions and are using the digital tools, MyDiet and DiaWatch, to manage their condition. The 1<sup>st</sup>-year intervention results, based on the first participants, are expected in the coming months. As participants joined the intervention over a period of time, the one-year follow-up point for all participants is expected to be reached in autumn 2024. The process evaluation of the recruitment process has also commenced along with preliminary analysis of the implementation of the DigiCare4You solution.

Yannis Manios, Professor at Department of Nutrition & Dietetics, Harokopio University and DigiCare4You coordinator, said, "having successfully completed all planned deliverables and milestones for the second reporting period, we are delighted with the progress and development of the DigiCare4You project. We eagerly anticipate receiving and analysing the first-year follow-up results."

### *Digital Tools*

A key feature of the DigiCare4You solution is the use of locally adapted digital tools. A second version of the digital tools, DiaWatch and MyDiet mobile apps which are used by end users, and MetaClinic and MetaDieta software, used by HCPs, was released during the second reporting period and is now being used by study participants and implementers, respectively.

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To assist implementers in monitoring and evaluating the condition and engagement of participants an 'AI Monitoring System', a 'Decision Support System' and visual analytics suite have been produced and will continue to be updated according to the implementation countries' needs. Extensive and continuous training of the local research teams on the digital tools and materials, including ethics and legal issues, was conducted to ensure standardisation in the procedures and data collection.

A second version of the digital "DigiCare4You platform" was also developed with active use of this platform in all implementation countries expected for the remaining duration of the project. Importantly, a secure cloud-based repository for secure data collection and exchange among stakeholders was also created and implemented since the beginning of the study. Partners are now in the process of developing a smart goals' monitoring feature by which HCPs, together with the participants, will have the possibility of setting and monitoring specific goals which will help support participants in improving lifestyle behaviours.

#### *School- and Community-based Intervention*

Not only does the DigiCare4You project aim to improve the prevention and management of T2D and HTN of the individuals participating in the intervention but it also seeks to do so in the broader community through two additional school- and community-based intervention components aiming to create a supportive environment for exchange of information and participation in social events supporting the adoption of a healthy and active lifestyle for the entire community. These components are expected to be fully implemented in the four implementation countries during the next-final period of the project.

#### **Next steps**

As we move into the last part of the project, partners focusing on the cost-effectiveness analysis, scale-up and transferability of the solution, and capacity building will start taking on a more prominent role in advancing the project. Partners will meet again in December 2024 for the sixth consortium meeting in Bulgaria.

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#### **Additional Information**

More than 61 million people live with diabetes in Europe today, the majority of whom with Type 2 diabetes (T2D), a number forecast to increase to 66 million by 2030<sup>1</sup>. About one third of people living with diabetes are undiagnosed, placing them at risk of severe, life-threatening complications such as cardiovascular and renal diseases, blindness and amputations. Although much progress has been made in recent years, notably in terms of treatment availability and options, prevention policies and programmes have remained largely ineffective.

#### **About DigiCare4You**

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<sup>1</sup> IDF Atlas, 10th Edition, 2021



DigiCare4You is a Horizon2020 project, consisting of 16 multidisciplinary consortium partners from Australia, Europe and the USA, seeking to improve the early prevention of Type 2 diabetes and hypertension. The project aims to do so by firstly, identifying parents/caregivers already living with, or at risk, of diabetes and HTN and secondly, developing a person-centred, community-based solution, that uses digital tools, to prevent the development of these conditions and/or improve their management and prevent and delay complications. The project also aims to assess the scalability and transferability of the DigiCare4You solution, within the implementation countries and beyond. The implementation study is conducted in two high-income countries (Greece and Spain) and two middle-income countries (Albania and Bulgaria).

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