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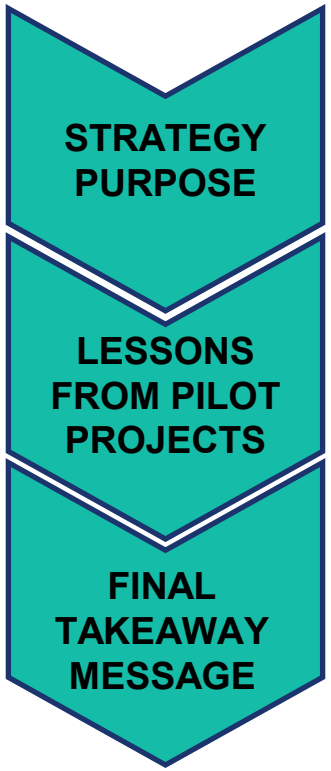
Final event
Budapest

Semmelweis University EMK Health Services Management Training Centre

The ICM Strategy – The Main Lessons

24 June 2026

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- Why DIGI4Care needed a regionally focused ICM Strategy
- What transnational knowledge did DIGI4Care and its pilot projects accumulate to foster digitally-enabled integrated care in the Danube Region
- How we should look back at the „DIGI4Care experience" based on the ICM Strategy

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Why an ICM Strategy?

DIGI4Care's strategic logic

1 → 2 → 3 → 4

Structural pressure
growing chronic disease burden, workforce constraints, fragmented care, regional innovation gaps

Digital enablement
shared tools at selected points of the patient pathway

Pilot lessons
real-world implementation across diverse Danube Region contexts

Strategy
Transnational transferable lessons for future adoption and scale-up

Champions of change
network of **local** actors committed to advancing digitalisation in healthcare across the Danube Region.

Action plans
To translate the lessons learnt during DIGI4Care into concrete **organisational** actions.

Pilot learning
Derived from implementation experiences, addressed to **national/regional** decision-makers

The ICM Strategy
Strategic lessons on the **Danube Region**

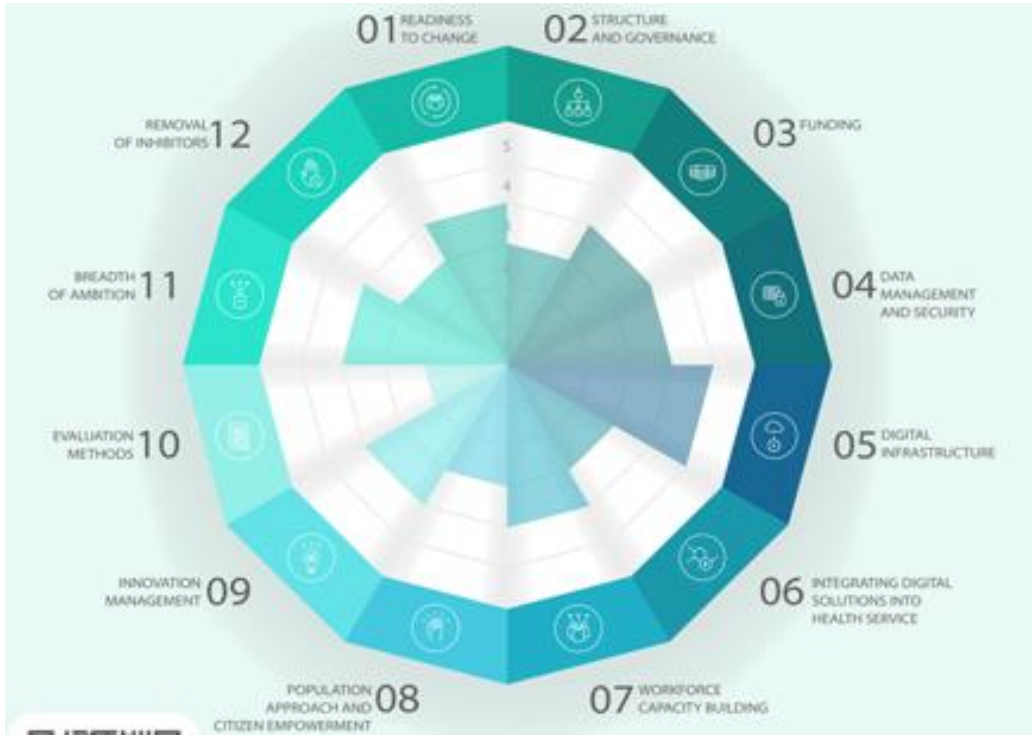
STRATEGY PURPOSE
LESSONS
FINAL TAKEAWAY

The ICM Strategy turns pilot experience into a regional, system-level summary of lessons learned to foster digitally-enabled integrated care and the narrowing of innovation gaps across the Danube Region.

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Mapping lessons onto 12 dimensions for adoption



The maturity model used for the context analysis

The model captures key maturity dimensions that shape whether digital health moves from isolated pilots to routine integrated care.

Set the conditions

01 Readiness to change • 02 Structure and Governance • 03 Funding • 12 Removal of inhibitors

Make data and tools work

04 Data management and security • 05 Digital Infrastructure • 06 Integration into health service delivery

Bring people with it

07 Workforce capacity building • 08 Population/citizen empowerment

Learn and scale

09 Innovation management • 10 Evaluation methods • 11 Breadth of Ambition

STRATEGY PURPOSE

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Pilot 1: Digitally-enabled diabetic retinopathy and CVD screening



STRATEGY PURPOSE

LESSONS

FINAL TAKEAWAY

Lesson 1

Wider-scale testing of an AI-enabled screening point instituted early in the care pathway can strengthen the rationale for systemic integration into routine outpatient workflows to **improve accessibility to diabetic retinopathy screening** in the Danube Region

- 08 Population approach & citizen empowerment
- 06 Integrating solutions into services
- 10 Evaluation methods

Lesson 2

Digital **care coordination support tools can enhance care integration** efforts across the Danube Region

- 06 Integrating solutions into services
- 05 Digital infrastructure
- 12 Removal of inhibitors

Strategic implication: screening tools should be designed and further tested as part of the established care pathway, not as a stand-alone digital intervention.

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Pilot 2: Teledidactic POCUS training for emergency medical services personnel

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STRATEGY PURPOSE

LESSONS

FINAL TAKEAWAY

Lesson 3

Transnationally **applied standardised remote training models** show promise as scalable solutions to **facilitate capacity building** that enables care integration in the Danube Region

- 07 Workforce capacity building
- 09 Innovation management
- 11 Breadth of ambition

Lesson 4

Scaling remote training is faster than embedding tele-supervised care into clinical routine .

- 02 Structure & governance
- 03 Funding
- 12 Removal of inhibitors

Strategic implication: training can travel quickly; clinical adoption moves only as fast as governance allows.

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Pilot 3: Digital health technologies in the follow-up, rehabilitation and long-term management of patients with CVD

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STRATEGY PURPOSE

LESSONS

FINAL TAKEAWAY

Lesson 5

Reducing technical complexity and optimising data interoperability are prerequisites for successful digitally-enabled care integration in the Danube Region

- 04 Data management & security
- 05 Digital infrastructure
- 06 Integrating solutions into services

Lesson 6

Institutionalising **human-centric support and co-creation can contribute to overcoming digital literacy barriers** and enhance patient adherence to new protocols as the Danube Region continues to test the adoption of digital solutions along care pathways

- 08 Population approach & citizen empowerment
- 07 Workforce capacity building
- 01 Readiness to change

Strategic implication: Digitally-enabled integrated care requires aligning technical and human enablers.

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Pilot 4: Digital health technologies in post-clinical rehabilitation and long-term care settings for persons

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STRATEGY PURPOSE

LESSONS

FINAL TAKEAWAY

Lesson 7

In digitally-enabled rehabilitation and long-term care across the Danube Region, to strengthen the human connection, **digital tools should be facilitators, not substitutes**

- 08 Population approach & citizen empowerment
- 07 Workforce capacity building
- 06 Integrating solutions into services

Lesson 8

Digitally-enabled cognitive **rehabilitation may be adapted to different care systems and institutional contexts**, but it may support integrated care **only if it is embedded into workflows, roles, and infrastructure,** rather than introduced as a standalone digital solution.

- 02 Structure & governance
- 05 Digital infrastructure
- 09 Innovation management

Strategic implication: a digitally-enabled care model may be adaptable to different contexts, but it should always strive to maintain the ”human element” in care.

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The DIGI4Care Journey: Overarching Strategic Lessons

Lesson 9

Minimum technological and interoperability standards can facilitate efforts to adopt digital health solutions across the Danube Region and contribute to the closing of the innovation gap

Lesson 10

To effectively contribute to the narrowing of intraregional innovation gaps, **future transnational projects should be designed with longer pre-implementation phases**, allowing time for structured assessment of factors influencing implementation and accounting for differing procurement timelines across countries

STRATEGY PURPOSE

LESSONS

FINAL TAKEAWAY

Digitally-enabled integrated care is not a technology deployment challenge

It is a system-readiness challenge: evidence, workflows, data, skills, governance and trust must move together

1 **Start with the pathway**

Define where and how the digital tool aims to improve access, continuity or decision-making.

2 **Build the enabling layer**

Standards, interoperability, training, rules and procurement must be in place early.

3 **Keep care human**

Digital tools should reduce friction and strengthen relationships – not replace clinical professionals.

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Final message

01 Readiness to Change
Human-centric support, digital literacy

02 Structure and Governance
workflow, regulation, embedding into existing systems

03 Funding
reimbursement and procurement conditions

04 Data Management and Security
interoperability and minimum standards

05 Digital Infrastructure
technical reliability and compatibility

06 Service integration
closed-loop pathways and care coordination support tools

07 Workforce Capacity Building
remote training, optimising staff capacity

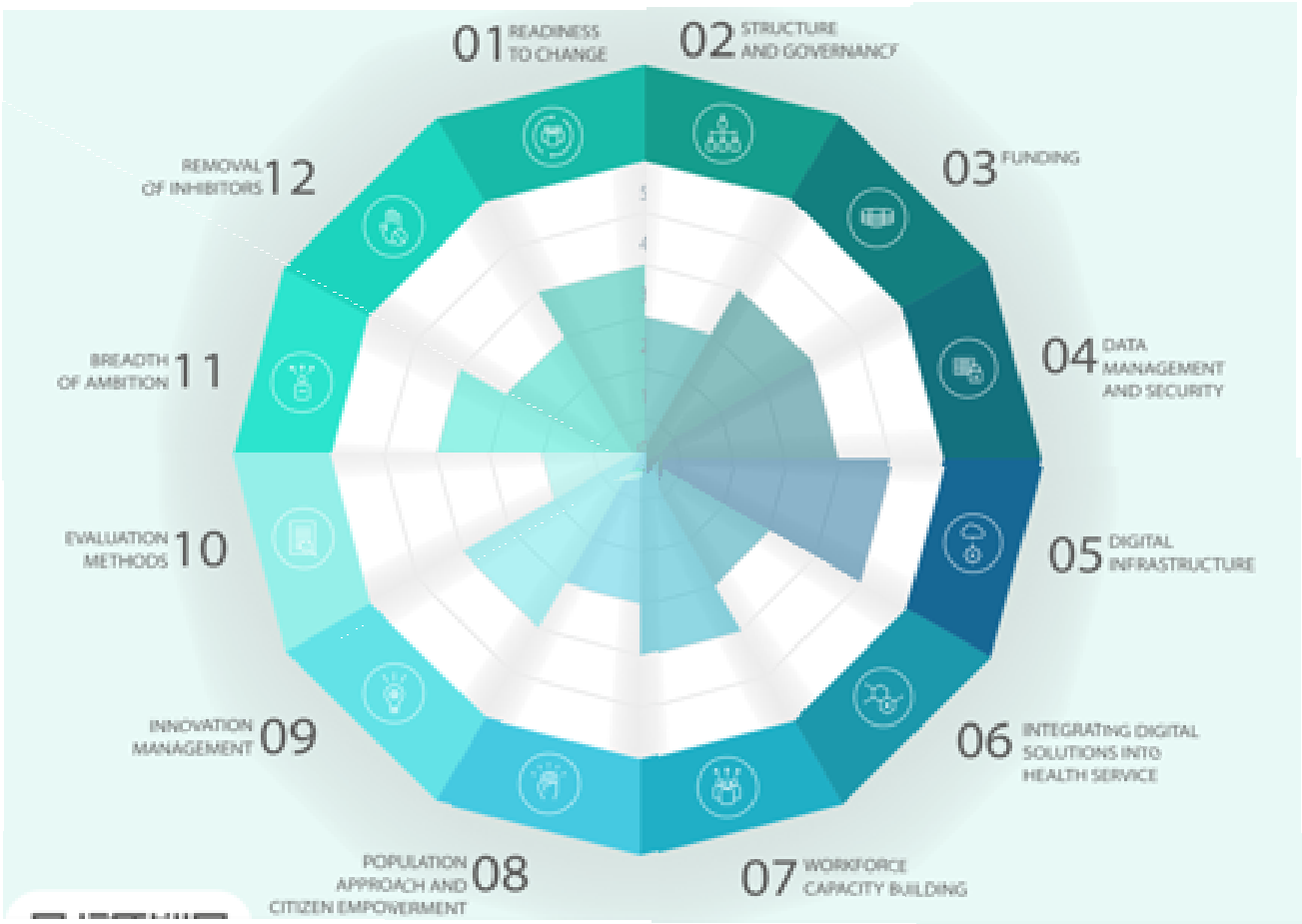
08 Population/citizens
accessible screening, co-creation, human contact

09 Innovation Management
Longer pre-implementation phases

10 Evaluation Methods
wider-scale testing and actionable evidence

11 Breadth of Ambition
transnational scale with local adaptation, takeaways on multiple levels

12 Removal of Inhibitors
pre-implementation mapping of implementation determinants, flexibility to address emerging challenges



DIGI4Care and its pilots gathered practical lessons in every crucial dimension encapsulated in the maturity model.

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Thank you

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