

# The history and the future of a provincial integrated social and health care organization

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In South Karelia, a region situated in South-Eastern Finland, previously separate municipal health care and social services were integrated into a new organization called EKSOTE in the beginning of 2010. The South Karelia Social and Health Care District (EKSOTE) combines primary and secondary health care, elderly care and social care, and it is responsible for delivering patient-oriented-care to the approximately 127 000 citizens of South Karelia, employing approx. 5.000 people and with a budget of 540 million euros.

EKSOTE's goal is to ensure equal access to social and health care services to all citizens in the region, across the boundaries of municipalities. Eksote makes it possible to develop integrated care processes, as the same electronic patient record system is used in the health care centers and hospitals of all communities belonging to the organization. The common electronic patient record allows also for example developing mobile social and health care services and utilizing a centralized placement model. In this Keynote Address I will describe the highly integrated social and health care system in South Karelia, and outline the forthcoming reform in Finland, which follows the regional integrated approach developed by EKSOTE. As of January 2023, 21 welfare service counties and the city of Helsinki will be responsible for ensuring that the population of the area receives the health, social, emergency and rescue services they need.

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