



FOR YOUR MEDIA KIT



European Project MedIEQ to address quality issues at medical web sites by providing state-of-the-art technology in the areas of web crawling and spidering, multilingual information extraction, semantic resources and quality labelling.

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The problem: practically anyone can go on the Web and provide "medical" information with little or no quality. Such information can be misleading and become even life threatening, if discovered and trusted by patients and/or their keens. Medical associations and agencies around Europe strive daily to characterise manually hundreds of new medical web sites of ambiguous quality.

The multi-national Project MedIEQ, co-funded by the European Commission under the Public Health programme, commenced its ambitious 3-year research effort on January 1. The project is set to pave the way towards the automation of quality labelling process in medical web sites.

The project consortium comprises internationally acknowledged partners in the fields of medical quality labeling, Web crawling and spidering, multilingual information extraction and semantic resources, from six European countries: Greece, Finland, Spain, Germany, Czech Republic and Switzerland. Based upon state-of-the-art technology in these fields, MedIEQ will deliver tools that crawl the Web to locate medical web sites in seven European languages (Spanish, Catalan, German, English, Greek, Czech, and Finnish) in order to verify their content against a set of machine readable quality criteria.

"As the number of medical web sites in various languages increases, it is more than necessary to implement control measures that give the consumers adequate guarantee that the health web sites they are visiting, meet a minimum level of quality standards and that the professionals offering the information on the web site are responsible for its contents. MedIEQ will support the work of medical quality labelling organisations providing tools to monitor already labelled





medical sites as well as to locate unlabelled sites and examine them against a set of pre-defined labelling criteria.” said Dr. Vangelis Karkaletsis, a Senior Researcher at NCSR “Demokritos”, Greece, who is coordinating the MedIEQ project.

MedIEQ continues the work of previous projects in the area of medical quality labeling (MedCIRCLE, MedCERTAIN, WRAPIN) and quality labelling standards (QUATRO). MedIEQ will try to solve a main problem of medical quality labeling, that is the need for a continuous monitoring of labeled websites.

“The use of the Internet as a source of medical information is very widespread. MedIEQ will provide us tools to improve the work of the quality labelling agencies and will help users discriminate between sites”, said Dr. Miquel Angel Mayer, Director of Web Médica Acreditada, Medical Association of Barcelona in Spain.

In the context of MedIEQ, two applications are foreseen, reflecting the two types of labelling mechanisms by the two medical quality-labelling organizations involved (WMA and AQUAMED). The first MedIEQ application concerns the constant monitoring of already labelled medical web sites comparing newly extracted information from the web sites’ pages against the existing labelling data stored in the accreditation label. The second MedIEQ application concerns the automatic identification of new medical web sites, in specific thematic areas, their characterization against machine-readable criteria, the filtering of some of the identified sites based on their characterization, and their organization into web directories in order to facilitate access by health consumers.

The resulting technology is expected to have a significant impact on medical quality labelling assisting the work of labelling experts, increasing the number of labelled medical sites across Europe and their effective monitoring, and thus improving the quality of health knowledge disseminated through the Web.





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