

Interview summary

Interviewee: Riccardo Farina, PhD, MSc, Policy Officer at the Department of Health and Social Policies of the Autonomous Province of Trento, Project Manager of Trentino Salute+

mHealth Practice: Trentino Salute+

Interviewers: Marzia Lucianer, Journalist, Head of Media Relations and Digital Communication at TrentinoSalute4.0

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Topics

Trentino Salute+ has a successful approach to the following topics:

- Execution
 - **Interoperability models**
 - **Data security – legal framework**
- Monitoring and Evaluation
 - **Monitoring and evaluation**

Summary

- An app explicitly developed for promoting healthy lifestyles.
- A privacy and security by design approach in the development of the solution.
- Innovative incentive system for the user based on two levels: personal and social.
- Designed to be a “serious game” in the health sector.
- Using the app and participating in “health challenges”, the user gets offers and discounts from associated partners (like gyms, swimming-pools, healthy food shops, etc.)
- The first operational phase of the solution which will end on 31st December 2020.
- The app currently available is still in a pilot phase.
- The official launch will be in spring 2021.
- The new app will propose new health targets to encourage behavioural change.
- The new app will link the promotion of health with the promotion of the territory, by providing hints to local healthy food products and walks and excursions in Trentino.

Scope of the mHealth Practice

Trentino Salute+ is an app explicitly developed for promoting healthy lifestyles in accordance with the first macro-thematic objective of the 2015-2025 Trentino Health Plan: "More years of healthy life". The promotion of healthy lifestyles triggers a dialogue between different entities: citizens, provincial government, social cooperatives, associations and commercial partners, following the

paradigm “the healthier your behaviour, the greater your help to others” and fostering the creation of a virtuous community.

The project idea was born following the public discussion which took place during the Trento Festival of Economics in 2017, focused on "Unequal Health", between the Councilor for Health and Social Policies of the Autonomous Province of Trento (PAT), a representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) and a representative of the National Agency for Regional Health Services (AGENAS). The app was officially launched during the 2018 edition of the Trento Festival of Economics and then made available to download in June.

Some months after the aforementioned public discussion, an interinstitutional working group was created in order to define the contents of the Project. The group was coordinated by representatives of the Department of Health and Social Policies, and involved the Provincial Healthcare Trust of Trentino (APSS) and the Bruno Kessler Foundation (FBK), following the framework of the competence centre for digital health TrentinoSalute4.0 in which the same subjects collaborate.

The main **strength** is that the initiative was strongly endorsed by the institutional side, which sped up its implementation; the formal approval of the initiative through a provincial act guarantees its reliability to all the stakeholders involved: citizens, social cooperatives, associations and commercial partners. On the other hand, a leading formal act implies that any modification to the initially foreseen plan has to undergo to the modification of the act itself, which can sometimes lengthen the time for a quick provision of the service.

The initiative Trentino Salute+ was formally approved through the Resolution of the Provincial Council of Trentino no. 535 of 29th March 2018, which, among other contents, identified the timeline to follow for its implementation for about three years, from the first semester of 2018 until the 31st December 2020.

The first **strength** is a privacy and security by design approach in the development of the solution. The second **strength** is the implementation of an innovative incentive system for the user based on two levels: personal and social. Using the app and participating in “health challenges”, the user gets offers and discounts from associated partners (like gyms, swimming-pools, healthy food shops, etc.) and earns “social points” with which he can support the social initiatives selected by the project Steering Committee. When a social initiative reaches a prefixed threshold, it can be financed up to 5.000 € through a dedicated fund allocated by the Provincial Government. The third strength is that Trentino Salute+ has been designed to be a “serious game” in the health sector.

On the other hand, the main **weaknesses** are: the current release of the solution implements a virtual coach which is too basic; the food diary that the user is asked to keep to evaluate the overcoming of the “health challenges” is not much user-friendly; the lack of integration of a pedometer for monitoring physical activity which instead must be entered manually by the user.

The shared **governance** already put in place through TrentinoSalute4.0 allowed to quickly engage PAT as decision maker, APSS as provider of services and FBK as research institute. Some institutional meetings took place to reach particular categories of stakeholders like General Practitioners, Pharmacists, voluntary associations related to particular pathologies and active citizenship. Commercial partners were identified inside the areas of interest for the project and then contacted directly. Citizens were involved through voluntary associations and through an information campaign that exploited all media and social channels.

The main **obstacles** were of a technical and organisational nature and they were related to the easy access to discounts through the app. In the case of large retailers, there was the difficulty of

integrating the app with their proprietary authentication systems. In the case of small retailers there was indeed the difficulty of automating the process by which the user claims and the retailer applies the discount so that the app keeps track of it. These obstacles have not yet been fully overcome.

A major obstacle has been represented by Covid-19 pandemic outbreak which prevented the engagement of a wider number of stakeholders and citizens on the territory initially foreseen to release a fully operational version of the app in May 2020. Anyway, this unexpected stop gave TrentinoSalute4.0 time to work on the technological side of the project, by taking into account all the feedbacks received from citizens and associations collected until then and laid the foundation for the new release of the app in December 2020.

The holistic approach to the promotion of health and healthy lifestyles by following the paradigm “the healthier your behaviour, the greater your help to others” can trigger horizontal synergies among different stakeholders of the territory and reinforce vertical relations between the territory and the institutions. A virtuous community that is attentive and committed to promoting health and healthy lifestyles can be then also the key for a sound economics and a social commitment on the territory.

A digitally enabled, person-centred holistic approach to healthy life-style and well-being where citizens and components of civil society are engaged through a co-creation process to improve themselves and the community in which they live is the key to bring public services closer to people.

The [figures](#) of the first operational phase of the solution which will end on 31st December 2020 are: 3.500 citizens involved, 20 selected social initiatives, 15 of which funded, and 10 commercial partners.

The app currently available is still in a pilot phase. The release of the fully operational version, initially planned in May 2020, was prevented by Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, and it is now foreseen in December 2020, while the official launch will be in spring 2021, after a promotional campaign on the territory. The new app, among other additional features, will propose new health targets to encourage behavioural change and will link the promotion of health with the promotion of the territory, by providing hints to local healthy food products and walks and excursions in Trentino. (To learn more: <https://www.trentinosalute.net/Aree-tematiche/Promozione-della-salute/Trentinosalute>)

Watch the [video](#) about this initiative [here](#) (access to playlist)