Data Privacy Detective Podcast Episode 46 – Finland Leads The Way In The Secondary Use Of Health And Social Care Data

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Medical data are considered particularly sensitive personal information. Laws and regulations in most countries, including the USA and throughout Europe, generally aim to restrict sharing such information with the target of building privacy walls around each person's data. But making such health data available more broadly is key to improved medical care, research and the advance of health science.

Finland is the first country known to have adopted an approach to allow third parties to access health data for the purposes of scientific research, drug and health technology development and knowledge-based management in social and health care. Researchers, service developers and other legitimate data users will be able to collect, combine and process data from Finnish registries smoothly and securely. While most data will be anonymized, for particular applications individual identities can be shared.

Those seeking access to such information will apply to a central authority that will screen applications to approve legitimate uses of Finland's substantial database. It will accept applications for access starting in early 2020.

Helsinki attorney Markus Myhrberg, member of Lexia explains how this will work in this podcast with the Data Privacy Detective. Markus heads Lexia's IPR, data protection and marketing practices. The Finnish Act on the Secondary Use of Health and Social Data was adopted on March 13, 2019 and became effective on May 1, 2019. The text of the Act is available in Finnish, in Swedish and in English).

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