

InfoCure

Certification for Trustworthy Providers of Digital Health Information

InfoCure is a non-profit initiative dedicated to ensuring the quality of digital health information and curbing the spread of misleading health information. To achieve this, we are developing an international certification system that evaluates health information providers based on structural and process criteria. The certification is designed to help digital platforms, search engines, and AI applications identify trustworthy sources. Our goal is to increase the reach of these sources, making it easier for everyone to access reliable health information.

Quality health information is the cornerstone of informed decision-making and responsible self-care. Yet, the proliferation of digital misinformation is a growing and serious public health threat. To tackle this challenge, the Bertelsmann Stiftung, in partnership with Gesundheit Osterreich GmbH and the Careum Foundation, is building an internationally scalable solution that addresses the urgent need for a systematic approach to quality assurance in the digital information landscape.

The initiative aims to establish global standards for identifying high-quality information sources and to increase the visibility of science-based information on digital platforms. This will systematically counter misleading and potentially harmful content. InfoCure is a digital certification system that will enable operators of platforms, search engines, chatbots and social networks to more easily and reliably identify trustworthy health information providers.

Ensuring Transparency and Integrity

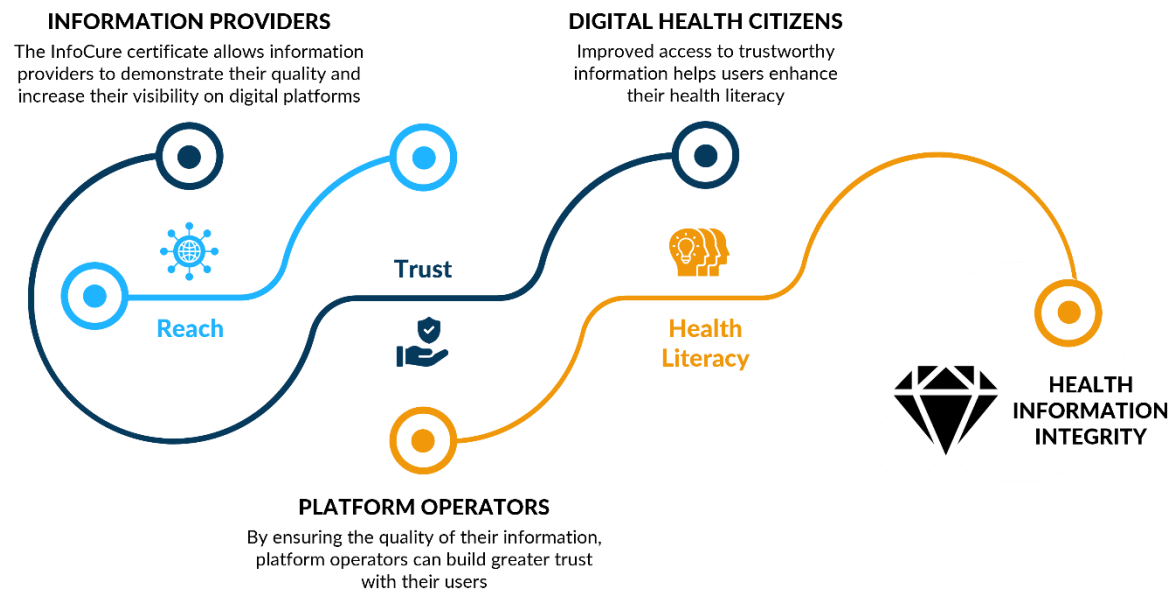
The quality of health information depends on a provider's institutional structures, methods, and creation processes. InfoCure therefore evaluates providers through a multi-stage audit using a combination of structural and procedural indicators. The assessment goes beyond a simple pass-or-fail model, combining mandatory minimum criteria with optional excellence criteria and valuable background

insights. The underlying evaluation system is being developed in collaboration with an international expert commission, the Nature Medicine Commission on Quality Health Information for All, which is creating the empirical, internationally adaptable indicator system that will serve as the scientific basis for the certification process.

Multiple Use Cases

Based on a rigorous, independent audit, the InfoCure certificate will provide detailed information that can be leveraged in multiple ways. It can serve as a prerequisite for inclusion in digital health ecosystems or for the awarding of quality seals. However, its primary focus is on digital platforms, search engines, chatbots, and social networks - the key hubs where people seek health information.

Platform operators can use InfoCure within their algorithms for search rankings and recommendation lists to improve the quality of information, prioritize science-based sources, and boost their visibility. Similarly, the certificate can be used to identify reliable sources for AI training. As AI chatbots increasingly access live online sources, the certificate can play a critical role in the algorithmic selection of content, boosting high-quality health information in the automated responses of these language models.



InfoCure: A Model for Impact and Value Creation

Global Reach – Local Foundation

In our globally connected digital world, national quality initiatives often have limited impact. For this reason, InfoCure was designed for international reach and scalability from the outset. The initiative is in close dialogue with international partners and multilateral organizations to develop and implement global standards.

However, certifying information providers requires a deep understanding of each country's specific context - from legal regulations and the national stakeholder landscape to unique local structures. The InfoCure concept therefore includes national contact points to conduct audits and provide expert guidance. Together, they will form a multilateral consortium of independent organizations that will oversee the system's dynamic evolution and ensure it continuously adapts to changing circumstances and new technologies.

Sustainable and Equitable Financing

InfoCure is a non-profit initiative driven by public interest, not financial gain. Our primary goal is to quickly scale the certification system to achieve the broadest possible impact. This means the certificate must be accessible and affordable for non-profits and smaller private-sector providers.

A fully digital certification process and high automation keep costs and effort low for providers. Additionally, a tiered fee model is being developed to accommodate providers' varying financial resources.

Rewarding Quality

There are many ways to counter the rapid spread of online mis- and disinformation, including fact-checking, public education on manipulation techniques, and automated content moderation. InfoCure complements these efforts with an approach that proactively gives trustworthy information greater visibility and reach.

By digitally labeling certified providers, we are paving the way for verified content to rise to the top of search and recommendation lists on major platforms and to be incorporated into the responses of AI-powered chatbots.

Creating Trust in a Digital World

Empirical data on health literacy worldwide shows that many people struggle to assess the credibility of digital health information. This makes it crucial to create safe digital spaces and enhance the integrity of the information ecosystem. The integrity of health information requires that it is accurate, non-discriminatory, consistent, and freely accessible - all within an open, inclusive information environment built on trust, transparency, and responsible governance. Together, we are committed to building digital information ecosystems that offer users safety, freedom, choice, and reliable information, empowering them to make well-informed, autonomous health decisions.

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The German Patient Commissioner to the Federal Government serves as the patron of the InfoCure initiative.

| BertelsmannStiftung

The Bertelsmann Stiftung is an independent, non-profit foundation that has been working for a more just, sustainable, and future-oriented society for over four decades. Its projects and studies aim to develop concrete solutions for key social challenges and to provide impetus for political, institutional, and civil society reforms. The foundation works in an interdisciplinary manner with an international network in six key fields: Education and Participation, Democracy and Social Cohesion, Health, Sustainable Social Market Economy, Digital Transformation, and Europe's Future.

<https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/>

careum

Careum is an independent, non-profit foundation established in 1882. Today, Careum includes Careum Publishing and the Center for Health Literacy, as well as its subsidiaries: Careum Educational Center, Careum School of Health, Careum Continuing Education, and Edubase. All funds from the foundation, along with the revenues generated by their subsidiaries, are invested fully in accordance with the foundational purpose. Careum uses these resources to support the quality and further development of their educational programs and infrastructure, to invest in their employees, and to fund innovations and projects related to education and health. In their commitment to the education and continuing professional development of healthcare professionals, they work closely with academic institutions, practical training providers, associations, and professional organizations. They are also active in national and international networks, such as the European network Sci-ana, ZIPAS (Zurich Interprofessional Clinical Training Ward), and the "Evivo Netzwerk" association for people with chronic illnesses.

<https://careum.ch/>



Through the Health Promotion Agenda, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection (BMASGPK) supports the implementation of targeted, broadly coordinated, quality-assured, effective and efficient health promotion measures, and contributes to a longer, self-determined life in good health for everyone in Austria. The Health Promotion Agenda is based at the National Research and Planning Institute for the Health Sector, Gesundheit Österreich GmbH (GÖG). The Board of Trustees of the Austrian Health Promotion Fund has overall responsibility for the Health Promotion Agenda. In addition to GÖG's own work, the funds are invested in commissioned projects and grants in order to provide significant and far-reaching support for the impact-oriented approach to health promotion in Austria, to increase the level of innovation, and thereby to address the field of health promotion comprehensively from a 360-degree perspective. The key thematic areas of the Health Promotion Agenda's framework programme correspond closely with the prioritised focus areas of the health promotion strategy.

<https://goeg.at/>

Quality Health Information *for All* A NATURE MEDICINE COMMISSION

The Nature Medicine Commission of Quality Health Information for All was announced in Nature Medicine in January 2025. The Commission has four aims to advance evidence-based strategies with a report in mid-2027 offering a blueprint for the future of advancing quality health information in a digital age. The Commission will address the gaps to quality health information on individual health and national economic prosperity; promote broader access to accurate, reliable and useful health information in the digital era; improve public health by advancing health literacy and information equity for all people and affirm the importance of health communication as a unique discipline to advance health and well-being. The Commission's work is managed through a network of three co-Secretariats located at the City University of New York's Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy, the University of Alabama College of Communication and Information Science, and the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp, Belgium.

<https://oneill.law.georgetown.edu/the-nature-medicine-commission/>