

# The interoperability of Healthcare Information Systems in Latin America and the Caribbean: PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

The advancements achieved through the Regional Public Good: Digital Transformation in Health to Mitigate the Effects of COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean, from 2021 to the present:

The Regional Public Good (RPG): "Digital Transformation in Health to Mitigate the Effects of COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean - LACPASS" is a project sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and led by RACSEL (Latin America and the Caribbean Digital Health Network), with the National Center for Health Information Systems (CENS) as its executing agency. The RPG pursues the exchange of health data within and between the countries of the region with three components:

- 1.- Enhancing higher levels of interoperability for the exchange of clinical health data.
- 2.- Data exchange for epidemiological surveillance and public health at national and regional levels.
- 3.- Create guidelines and directives for the sustainable development of Telehealth.

## ACHIEVEMENTS:

### May 2021:

**RPG Kickoff**, thanks to funding from the IDB, with six participating countries and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) as a strategic partner.

Use case: COVID-19 Certificate.

- Distribution and training through webinars managed by RACSEL.

### January - May 2022:

Knowledge transfer towards countries for the generation of COVID-19 certificates according to the EU-DCC standard (European Union - Digital Covid Certificates).

- **First LACPASS Connectathon** held in Santiago de Chile in May. Eight countries participated from the region and five of them adopted the EU-DCC standard in production.

### January - October 2023:

LACPASS member countries began implementing a bundle of enabling tools to be prepared for the second regional Connectathon

### November 2023:

The second LACPASS **Connectathon** was held in São Paulo, Brazil, with the participation of governmental health representatives from 16 countries.



## ALL ABOUT THE SECOND LACPASS CONNECTATHON

**From November 12th to 14th, 2023, in São Paulo, Brazil.**

The second regional Connectathon was held as part of the execution of the RPG as mentioned above. Sixteen countries participated: Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, and Uruguay.

### WHAT WAS THE SECOND CONNECTATHON ABOUT?

The second LACPASS Connectathon gathered representatives from RACSEL member countries, delegates from health ministries and authorities, information technologies and telecommunications experts, and technical teams who closely monitored the sessions.

Countries experienced extensive preparation months in advance to participate in the Connectathon. The preliminary work involved creating the necessary technical enablers for the exchange of clinical information in a timely and secure way and laying the groundwork for the continued clinical care of the population moving from one country to another.

Leading up to the event, technical teams from the Ministries of Health engaged in a comprehensive training program conducted by IHE (Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise) and LACPASS. This training aimed to instruct them on integration profiles and the Gazelle Test Management platform, implemented explicitly for executing technical assessments.



# REGIONAL E-HEALTH INTEROPERABILITY CONNECTATHON LACPASS

During the Connectathon, teams worked in 2 tracks:

## Track 1: INTERNATIONAL PATIENT SUMMARY:

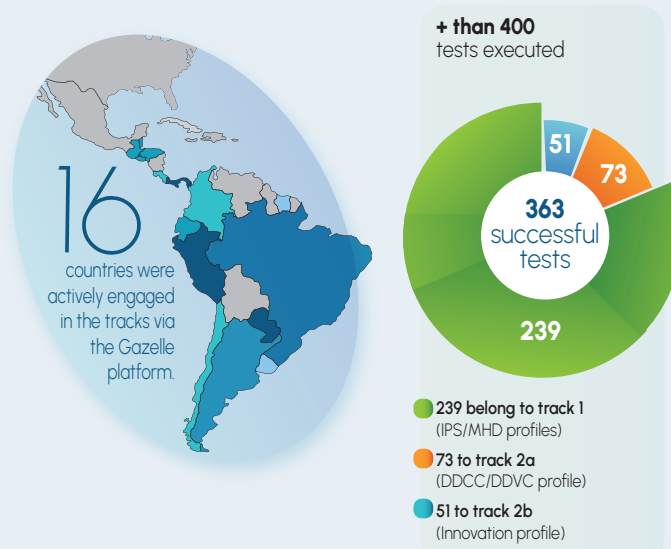
In this track, each participant generated their international patient summary based on the IPS profile (International Patient Summary), achieving interoperability according to the transactions defined by the MHD profile (Mobile Health Document). This process will enable healthcare professionals to access a citizen's clinical summary for eventual review from another country or within the same country.

## Track 2a: VACCINATION CERTIFICATES:

Participants generated, validated, and verified vaccination certificates for COVID-19, polio, yellow fever, and measles in this track. To accomplish this, teams adhered to the trust framework provided by the GDHCN (Global Digital Health Certification Network) of the World Health Organization. The DDCC/DDVC (Digital documentation of COVID-19/Vaccine certificates) standard was used for vaccination certificates.

## Track 2b: INNOVATION

This innovation track focused on transmitting vaccination certificates issued by Ministries of Health to citizens' digital wallets.



The DDCC structure is tested for the first time with non-COVID vaccines.



Platforms (FHIR servers) hosted in 16 countries for governments to conduct proof of concept tests on cross-border interoperability.

These results contribute to building the foundations of a **Pan-American Digital Health Highway (PH4H)**, a project promoted by the IDB and PAHO and driven by regional countries. The PH4H seeks to facilitate access and sharing of health data, enabling healthcare professionals and patients to access and share their health data wherever they are, among other digital health advancements.

## NEXT STEPS

- Implementation of the final phase of the LACPASS project will seek to develop enablers for implementing cross-border Telehealth.
- To continue building the PH4H by implementing new projects:  
**Project 1:** Establishing a trusted network in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) to enhance access to healthcare services for migrant populations.

**Project 2:** Create a regional agreement for cross-border digital health services.

- To continue with the convergence of cross-border interoperability initiatives for LAC and further development of agreements and technical guidelines to support countries in adopting new digital health tools, helping their classification in healthcare models.