Question for written answer E-009511/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: Big data and patient health data

In 2016, a law was passed in France to modernise healthcare services and strengthen the role of big data. In theory, making healthcare data more accessible can provide valuable information on the use of pharmaceutical products, side effects and social factors, and can also be a source of evidence for medical prescription malpractice lawsuits. However, both the general public and the French data protection agency, CNIL, still have serious reservations. The CNIL is very cautious about authorising the sharing of patient health data, and with good reason.

1. France has passed a law that will enable businesses and researchers to consult patient health data without authorisation. What is the Commission's opinion of this in view of the European Open Science Cloud?

2. Criticism has been voiced not only by patients but also from within the medical profession. Almost every country in Europe entrusts data collection and the definition of standards to its respective institutions - and both of these are jealously guarded. How does the Commission propose to allay these fears without invalidating medical confidentiality?

3. Does the Commission believe that Europe can assume a leading role in this domain, with regard to the need for a medical profession with specific IT training?