

Establishing the Swiss Society for Hospital at Home: A Pioneering Journey

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We are delighted to introduce the Swiss Society for Hospital at Home (SHaHS), a pioneering initiative that was very recently established in Switzerland. For this interview, we have the privilege of speaking with Dr. Severin Pöchtrager, the President of the Swiss Society, to gain insights into their work, vision for the future, and the impact they envision for healthcare in Switzerland and beyond.

1. Can you provide an overview of the Swiss Hospital at Home Society (SHaHS)? What is its mission and key objectives?

The SHaHS wants to work towards sustainable funding for hospital-equivalent medicine in Switzerland.

We are committed nursing professionals, doctors, medical experts, and interested parties who have set ourselves the goal of establishing the innovative and internationally proven hospital-at-home treatment concept in the Swiss healthcare system.

Our aim is to create framework conditions for hospital-at-home care in Switzerland to bring high-quality medical care and care directly to people's homes.

2. What inspired the establishment of SHaHS, and what gap in healthcare delivery does the society aim to address?

In recent years, several HaH initiatives (hospital equivalent and early hospital discharge) have developed in parallel in Switzerland. The impetus for founding the SHaHS came in Barcelona at the World Hospital at Home Congress (WHAHC), where the various initiatives in Switzerland got to know each other.

3. In the context of the World Hospital at Home Congress (WHAHC), how has the global perspective on home-based healthcare influenced SHaHS's initiatives and strategies?

The WHAHC has motivated us to also offer HaH care for seriously ill people and the experiences we have shared have given us self-confidence in our dealings with health insurance companies and health policy makers.

4. Has SHaHS drawn inspiration or learned valuable insights from the

WHAHC in shaping its approach to hospital-at-home services? Are there specific aspects of the WHAHC that have had a notable impact on SHAHS's development?

Above all, the exchange and sharing of experiences from other countries and getting to know the HaH initiatives in Switzerland personally was extremely important for us.



5. How does SHaHS collaborate with other organizations or entities in the field of home-based healthcare?

Are there any partnerships or collaborations that have been particularly influential in the society's development?

Currently, the most important partnerships are the three operationally active Hospital at Home units that provide hospital-equivalent acute care at home in Switzerland. Two of them are in the Zurich area <https://www.hospitalathome.ch/> and <https://visit-spitalzollikerberg.ch/de/> and one of them is in the Basel area where I am also operationally active <https://www.klinik-arlesheim.ch/unser-angebot/medizin/701-hospital-at-home>

6. What challenges did SHaHS encounter during its establishment and early phases, and how were these challenges addressed?

The main challenge was to involve all active Hospital at Home initiatives in Switzerland in the foundation and then to form different categories for the various Hospital at Home services (specialized care with telemedicine consultations, early hospital discharge, and hospital-equivalent care). So that it is clear to everyone what form of Hospital at Home is involved.

7. Can you elaborate on some of the key initiatives or programs that

SHaHS has undertaken to promote and enhance hospital-at-home services in Switzerland?

The main aim of SHaHS is to create conditions in the Swiss healthcare system for hospital-at-home treatment that will enable nationwide hospital-at-home care in Switzerland in the future. Currently, funding for HaH is still in project status and not yet “standard funding” in the healthcare system.

We also want to enable other hospitals to implement HaH so that they do not face the same challenges as our pioneering project at Klinik Arlesheim or Spital Zollikerberg.

8. Looking ahead, how do you envision the future of home-based healthcare in Switzerland, and what role does SHaHS aim to play in shaping that future?

We see hospital-equivalent treatment, but also early hospital discharge or specialized care with telemedical support as a real opportunity for the challenged healthcare system, as we are addressing a social trend towards decentralization.

You can find more information about us on our developing homepage: www.shahs.ch.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Medical studies in Vienna. Trained as a general practitioner at various hospitals in Austria. Resident in internal medicine at the Arlesheim Clinic and the Medical University Clinic in the Liestal Cantonal Hospital.