

# Ireland Where Digital Health Thrives



An Ibec Campaign



# Ireland as testbed for innovation and collaboration

**Kieran Daly, Chief Technology Officer and Co-founder of HealthBeacon, talks about their injection care management system (ICMS), partnerships and Ireland's support for digital health companies.**



"We saw the struggles that patients were having in the home with staying on track with their medications," says Kieran Daly from HealthBeacon, a leading medication adherence technology company. "On average around 50% of patients are not adhering to their medication after a year according to the World Health Organization, which is a big problem for patients, doctors and even drug companies."

"One of the most common delivery methods for chronic medications is self-injection. In brainstorming how to support patients, healthcare professionals and pharma clients, we realised that every patient needs a sharps bin in the home. So, what if we made these bins smart and allowed people to check whether they had taken their medications or not. That's why we created HealthBeacon, the world's first smart sharps bin."

The HealthBeacon smart sharps bin is digitally connected via an integrated SIM card and is programmed with a patient's medication schedule. It uses customised reminders to help patients start and stay on track with medication.

"It captures the moment of disposal, timestamps it, gives the adherence score and date of next injection on the screen on the top of the bin," says Kieran. "If a patient disposes of their medication 4 August at 1pm, for example, this will be photographed and updates the patient record which can then be viewed by those looking after that patient's care."

“This helps people to make decisions that will improve their own contributions to the management of their condition. We are enormously proud of this innovation, as it is having a measurable impact on medication adherence of patients. As many as 96% of patients accept HealthBeacon as part of their treatment.”

## Partnership

Patients can stop taking their medication for many different reasons, and during the Covid-19 lockdown, one of those reasons was the restriction of movement and some losing easy access to a pharmacy. In fact, Kieran says that during peak lockdown, there was a 20% drop in patients taking their injectable medication on time. That is why HealthBeacon launched a new Covid-19 support offering for patients which was reimbursed by private health insurer Laya Healthcare. The insurer reimburses the HealthBeacon benefit to help their members stay on track with their treatment.

The Covid-19 support is available to Laya’s members which includes virtual care support, coordination of medication delivery, medical waste collection, and home monitoring. Kieran says that Covid-19 has shown the importance of patients being treated remotely and away from the hospital unless, of course, a visit is deemed necessary. And payors, such as insurer and hospital systems, are now opening up to this in a systemic shift, from fee-for-service towards fee-for-value and fee-for-outcome.

“Insurers like Laya are thinking of more intelligent use of these medications and the feedback loops that go with them. Insurers are such a big stakeholder in the whole ecosystem. They can influence more pharma companies and device companies to think about how to be more effective in the treatment of patients. Once the payors start to establish new rules, then the whole market sits up and takes notice.” HealthBeacon has successfully established other partnerships with pharmaceutical companies, AbbVie and Teva.

“We launched with Teva around four years ago on a medication called Copaxone, which is a drug used for multiple sclerosis taken three times a week,” says Kieran. “It’s one of those trickier medication schedules and we can see the impact the injection care management system has had. Any patients in Ireland who are written a script for that medication, are automatically offered a HealthBeacon unit as part of the process.”

Clodagh Kevans, Teva's Speciality Medicines Director, shared their perspective on the collaboration, “HealthBeacon and Teva have an excellent partnership in Ireland. We know that the patients really value the service and the impact it has had on patients has been extremely positive.”

Following the success of the Teva Copaxone program, Teva partnered with HealthBeacon to offer the ICMS to patients on their new medication Ajovy for adult patients with severe

migraines. Kieran says this medication is being considered for European rollouts too.

HealthBeacon also partners with AbbVie on the medication HUMIRA, which helps treat rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn’s disease, psoriasis, and other immune-mediated inflammatory conditions. HealthBeacon now supports this medication across several European markets.

“This international reach is important to us, as we wanted to design and build something scalable which could benefit patients across cultures and regions. So, as of today, we’re in 14 different countries around the world, from the United States to South Africa. We have a good global spread.”

## Home support

HealthBeacon is a digital therapeutics company, and Kieran says that Ireland as a whole is a good-sized market for these digital health companies.

“Ireland has been a fantastic place to launch and build our success,” says Kieran. “We have developed the business by having a trial and pilot in Ireland, and using that as a blueprint for exporting and bringing it into other markets. I have noticed many other companies doing this too. We have access to pharma companies and medical device companies. Being a small country makes it easy to have this type of grassroots support, which is something I don’t see much in other markets.”

Kieran says the way Ibec’s Digital Health Working Group has approached things has also been a fantastic help. “They acknowledge that there’s a blend of people needed in this ecosystem. You need your big pharma companies, but you also need the new generation of up-and-coming indigenous businesses. For us, they have supported us by getting us in the room with these powerful companies as equals, so we can develop direct relationships. The environment they have created is one of support and equality.”

## Making care better

With HealthBeacon’s success in Ireland and global markets, Kieran says their aim has never wavered. Our vision is to continue to connect people to better health through sustainable, digitally enabled solutions.

They are focused on helping with medication adherence in order to aid patients to have better treatments. It helps them have more open and frank conversations with their doctors, but it also has economic benefits too.

“Medication adherence also means that you could see a reduction in the acute hospital population levels. Anything that can stop a patient going to the hospital will always save costs and improve the ongoing health and wellbeing of thousands of lives. And that’s the most important thing.”



📍 **Ibec Head Office**  
84/86 Lower Baggot Street,  
Dublin 2.  
T: + 353 1 605 1500  
E: [membership@lbec.ie](mailto:membership@lbec.ie)  
[www.lbec.ie/membership](http://www.lbec.ie/membership)

📍 **Galway**  
Ross House,  
Victoria Place,  
Galway.  
T: + 353 91 561109  
E: [galway@lbec.ie](mailto:galway@lbec.ie)  
[www.lbec.ie/west](http://www.lbec.ie/west)

📍 **Cork**  
Knockrea House,  
Douglas Road,  
Cork.  
T: + 353 21 4295511  
E: [cork@lbec.ie](mailto:cork@lbec.ie)  
[www.lbec.ie/cork](http://www.lbec.ie/cork)

📍 **Limerick**  
Gardner House Bank Place,  
Charlotte Quay,  
Limerick.  
T: + 353 61 410411  
E: [midwest@lbec.ie](mailto:midwest@lbec.ie)  
[www.lbec.ie/midwest](http://www.lbec.ie/midwest)

📍 **Donegal**  
3rd Floor,  
Pier One Quay Street,  
Donegal Town, Donegal.  
T: + 353 74 9722474  
E: [northwest@lbec.ie](mailto:northwest@lbec.ie)  
[www.lbec.ie/northwest](http://www.lbec.ie/northwest)

📍 **Waterford**  
Waterford Business Park  
Cork Road  
Waterford  
T: + 353 51 331260  
E: [southeast@lbec.ie](mailto:southeast@lbec.ie)  
[www.lbec.ie/southeast](http://www.lbec.ie/southeast)

📍 **Brussels**  
Avenue de Cortenberg, 89,  
Box 2,  
B-1000 Brussels,  
Belgium.  
T: + 32 (0)2 512.33.33  
E: [europe@lbec.ie](mailto:europe@lbec.ie)  
[www.lbec.ie/europe](http://www.lbec.ie/europe)