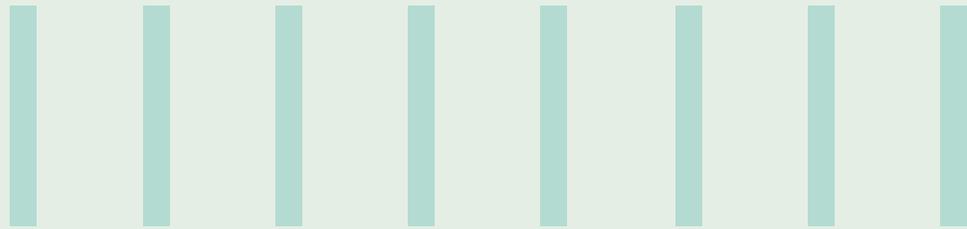


ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF HEALTHCARE - FROM IDEAS TO ACTIONS



The digital revolution is transforming industries and economies around the world from being primarily mechanical to electronic. And the healthcare sector is no exception. Digital technologies hold the potential to change the predominantly reactive model that the industry follows to a preventive care model, one that promises a better quality of care and enhanced access. Moreover, with remote monitoring tools and smart health solutions, it offers patients more convenience and flexibility while simultaneously bringing down costs for providers.

As healthcare enterprises get ready to dip their toes in a digital health revolution, industry leaders and SMEs from the healthcare sector came together to discuss digital health solutions, how to accelerate their adoption, and the roadblocks that are present at the DIA CoRE Singapore Annual Meeting 2022, held on 12 July in Singapore.

The Promise of Digital Health Solutions

The major area of focus revolved around how to better demonstrate the value of digital health solutions to providers, payers, and hospital enterprises. Three things need to be addressed at the outset.

First, one must find a way to differentiate, and possibly identify an unmet need or a complementary area that can increase adherence or treatment efficiency. For instance, this could extend the continuum of care across the health condition, into, preventive or post-operative or the solution could help personalize the treatment regimen at an individual level, leading to intrinsic value creation and demand generation.

Secondly, the skills required to fully develop such a solution should be identified. In this case, collaborations or partnerships

with individuals who have expertise in technology such as IoT, Human Factor Engineering, Cloud, Connectivity Protocols (like Proximity, Bluetooth, and Wireless), Information Security, Interoperability, and Data Privacy. Here, the focus should be on partners who have experience in bringing up or putting together a medical-grade digital platform or a SaMD solution. It also requires the partner's ability to customize solutions that can be modified depending on patient needs and therapy requirements.

Thirdly, seen from a value generation perspective, adoption is key. There is a need to engage in a substantial amount of field testing by engaging doctors, patients, caregivers, and other stakeholders. And adopt an iterative development methodology to ensure that the market feedback is addressed so that the solution can be adjusted to meet the consumer expectation.



Initiating a Mindset Shift for Reimbursement Pathways



While digital health products are finding multiple takers, their widespread adoption, however, depends upon a mindset shift regarding their reimbursement pathways. One of the most important reasons why a shift is required is because of evolving patient journeys. For instance, we can see how telemedicine has completely transformed the care delivery model, with basic processes being automated to ensure faster approvals. Moreover, digital tech has improved the quality of patient care. So, registration and reimbursement in this era of digital health will have to be changed according to changing patient journeys as services and products have become more consumer-centric and service-oriented.

Additionally, this change in the patient journey is driving a parallel change in the value chain with new touch points and market dynamics. This brings into focus new and emerging technologies that are further revolutionizing the healthcare industry. Companies are looking at combining regulatory expertise with digital tech to check for regular updates in real-time for clinical as well as regulatory insight.

With new technologies, more players are entering the ecosystem, like insurance companies. They are integrating with other players and changing the patient journey and significantly improving the patient's experience in new ways.



Navigating the Complexities Towards Successful Adoption

With all that being said, the successful adoption of digital health technologies depends upon organizations and enterprises' having the right strategy to navigate the policies in a particular geography or region. Companies with lesser resources need to optimize their already existing resources because they are unlikely to be able to influence regulatory schemes or have the funding that will flow into the market. They must live with what's there.

For all other markets in the region, to get to that position of maturity, a collective effort from industries and organizations or other trade bodies will be required. Speaking of collaborations and partnerships that can speed up digital health adoption in APAC, one of the panelists mentioned ADDC – the Asia Pacific Digital health and Data Consortium, which was set up in 2020, in collaboration with the CORE in the US, comprising 4 companies Roche, MSD, Takeda and J&J.

The vision of this consortium is to make it available and establish it for the use of digital health technology and digital health data. Thereby establishing healthcare that is empowering, accessible for patients, efficient for healthcare providers, and cost-effective for health systems.

Equitable Healthcare for All

Moreover, digital healthcare with disruptive innovation promises to be a great leveler across economic strata. However, to make it happen, the funding aspect needs to be ensured. There are other ways to ensure funding and co-funding for patients either by partnering with new payers like private insurance or with banks who are willing to fund them. For the traditional payers, it is about helping them increase their capabilities to better evaluate this technology.

We talked about the corporate deployment of technologies in some areas that can standardize the quality of care or raise the threshold from being a below standard of care to an average standard of care. And those technologies in certain circumstances can be very powerful and uplifting.

The way we look at digital health platforms and the benefit that each one of these countries can derive from digital platforms is very different. In fact, there are use cases even in India, where the birth mortality rate has been reduced substantially by the simple use of text messages over older generation cell phones (not smartphones) - the ones that are economically viable for the rural population.

A digital platform or solution may not always be a complex product companion app or combination product, but it can be a simple intervention as well. What matters is whether it will create an impact and what benefits it will bring.



Overcoming Obstacles One Step at a Time

The most important bottleneck to adopting digital health in the APAC region include legal barriers, patient confidentiality, and technical application. One of the key barriers is the implementation and it lies within the users. Another lie with clinicians' reluctance to adopt.

So, the question really is how to partner with these healthcare professionals to ensure the smooth integration of these technologies in their clinical practice. By leveraging good momentum currently and further promoting the volume, create a sense of mandate, and a sense of urgency together with stakeholders in specific regions and jointly create and explore solutions for some of the bottlenecks.





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For over 2 decades, Gurdeep Singh Rooprai has been providing IT solutions and consulting services to many clients at Infosys. Over the years, he has tried to keep up with the pace of the ever-evolving industry and focus on digital, automation, analytics, IoT, security, cloud, connected health, XR and more. Along with a team of client partners, he has managed a variety of engagements to drive value for clients. Some of these include cost-of-care data aggregation and reporting, pharma sales and marketing/medicine development/ERP portfolio management, digital factory for sales/marketing asset creation and deployment, various software + services solutions, next-generation manufacturing and warehousing initiatives, information security services, headless eCommerce solutions, and digital health solutions. He has taken a keen interest in the Digital Health Platform for the Life Sciences industry and works with a passionate group of techno-functional experts to understand the space better.

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