Public Health & Evolving Emphasis of Technology

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Public health primarily should focus on primary health care of citizens, preventive and promotive care- improving health-seeking behaviour, prevention of diseases, and health system strengthening at a national level. An important question is: how can modern technology be deployed to improve the quality & cost of health delivery?

During the past two decades, the world has seen profound changes in technology development, with the current innovations & advancements, healthcare technology must increasingly assume a **central role in public health interventions - impacting affordability, quality, wider reach, simplicity and scalability.** With communication devices available even in the remotest areas, it brings a potential with these technologies to revolutionize health service delivery and act as a "game-changer" for an efficient and people-centered health care system in the 21st century.

Successful usage of technology in public health interventions are few and are not yet utilized to their full potential. Such platform solutions should enable the public health system to build and execute a robust infrastructure for "National Health Stack" **using a technology platform that's scalable, execute clinical services that are customizable & leverage resources for improved accessibility across public and private healthcare ecosystem for its citizens.**

Unfortunately, the adoption of technology in public health has not kept pace with the advancements in the field of healthcare due to various limiting factors, including the presence of various players with differing objectives; duplication of uncoordinated efforts across multiple geographical areas, counteractive programs, and even conflicts in some cases. The health ministries and governments can leverage solutions to improve patient outcomes in public healthcare.

There are a number of reasons that we've seen for this low rate of adoption by various governments-

- Existing technologies are designed by people with little knowledge of the sector
- Lack of understanding between providers, implementers and government priorities on national health.
- Lack of information to integrate technology as a key component in development interventions
- State's not fully aware of the possibilities to use new technologies for national health program design.
- Fear to lead change from tried and tested methods to innovative methods: for example, moving from face to face doctor consultations to telemedicine.

- Lack of will & infrastructure to invest time to deploy new technology; for example, using decision support and record-keeping tool for maternal and neonatal care by midwives, v/s manually recording health information.

Governments need to ensure that every citizen not only survives and thrives, but also transforms the health and human potential of all people in society. This transformation can truly be bought to reality by leveraging technology and disrupted by innovation.

A clear national health stack strategy can remove many barriers and challenges to the rapid use of modern technology and in the successful implementation of various initiatives and specific World Health Assembly resolutions. Concerns that investing in the use of modern technology comes at a high initial cost compared to basic health needs and other competing priorities are diminished when evaluating solutions like Clinivantage. Deployment of Platform comes at a very minimal upfront cost and is amortized over the transactional costs of services offered; demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of modern technology in promoting public health mission.

Technology, when used appropriately, can benefit with the potential to improve efficiency, safety and quality of care in public health & to strengthen health systems at a national level. As recognized by the World Health Assembly, all countries must use the opportunities to build & strengthen their eHealth systems as a part of health programs thereby improving health services.

While governments have a key role in pushing the agenda, it will be important to strengthen collaboration with innovative technology organizations and other key stakeholders to build a national health stack. It is clear that enhancing the use of modern technology is an excellent investment for the future.

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