mHealth (Mobile Health) - Transforming healthcare
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Facts

- About 5 billion internet subscribers worldwide, with more than 70% of them in low-and-middle income countries.
- 68% of adults worldwide own mobile phones.
- The World Health Organization says that 80% of countries have at least one type of mHealth service.
- Inadequate focus on health system strengthening is one of the biggest barriers to mHealth having a transformative effect on health outcomes.

Background:

- The use of mobile technology (mHealth) to improve access to healthcare and health outcomes is booming worldwide.
- mHealth can include anything from appointment reminders, call centres and emergency telephone services to mobile telemedicine and highly-sophisticated real time decision support.

Aims:

- To find innovative ways for mobile technology to improve access to affordable and effective healthcare.
- To connect communities to their healthcare providers and services and promote community and patient centred care.

Projects:

- FoodSwitch empowers families to identify healthier food choices via their smartphone and provides policy makers essential food quality information.
- The China Center for mHealth Innovation (CCmHI) has been established to further advance mHealth initiatives in China.
- SMARThealth is a primary care ecosystem harnessing mHealth technology to provide high quality healthcare by a low cost re-engineered workforce in India.
- SMARThealth platforms have been shown to improve cardiovascular risk management in Australia; large-scale studies in India and China are underway.
- TEXTME & TEXTMEDS support lifestyle behaviour and medication adherence for Australian CVD patients, via a text message service.
- Support-HF is assessing an IT-supported home-care system for UK heart failure patients via real time data analysis and decision support.

Impact:

- While mHealth has the potential to be transformative globally, low and middle income countries have the greatest potential to benefit from such innovation.
- In countries with sizeable rural and remote communities like Australia, India and China, mHealth has the potential to reduce intrinsic barriers to healthcare access is also substantial.
- mHealth initiatives often support individuals; the greatest potential is in improving the efficiency, quality and access to healthcare services.

Contact

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