

Driving eHealth in Nigeria: A Policy Recommendation.

Dr Olajide Joseph Adebola
Society for Telemedicine and eHealth
in Nigeria

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Outline

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Introduction

- One of the more significant developments over the past decades has been the emergence and widespread deployment of information and communication technologies
- The 'digital revolution' has transformed our everyday lives and has had a pervasive influence on work and organizations



Introduction

- ICT has captured the attention of health care providers as well as health policy makers, who are encouraging these technologies primarily
- Because of their potential to address issues such as inequalities in access to health care and the need to reduce costs,
- while delivering at least equivalent, if not better, standards of health care than traditional alternative



Problem Description

The components in the non implementation of eHealth and Telemedicine includes;

- professional practice issues,
- quality of care issues,
- financial resources issues
- Revenue generation
- Lack of eHealth governance





NATIONAL SPACE RESEARCH
& DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
(NASRDA)



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

TELEMEDICINE PROJECT

IN COLLABORATION WITH



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Policy Options

- The power of information and communication technology (ICT) to transform health systems is now undisputed. However, in order for eHealth to take root and grow in Nigeria;
- National eHealth Council – an instrument for policy advice to the Government on eHealth matters. It should include all major stakeholder groups in Nigeria, but remain a government sponsored organ
- National Center of Excellence for eHealth – A national center of excellence for eHealth policy coordination, and technical support for health services, as recommended by the World Health Assembly resolution on eHealth (WHA58.28). Preferably, this should be a network of centers
- eHealth Corps – a nationally recognized professional corps of eHealth experts within the Health authority, with full post descriptions and a scheme of service, so that eHealth experts can envision careers in the health system of the country
- National eHealth society – a national professional association; affiliated with international organizations such as the International Society for Telemedicine and eHealth (IsfTeH), to provide links to other professionals outside the country for sharing experiences, to mutual advantage



Policy Options

Role of SFTeHIN;

- Advocacy – articulating ethical and evidence-based policies for the use of ICT in the health sector
- Building national capacity for eHealth by supporting the development of i) eHealth experts; ii) health providers capable of harnessing the power of ICT to improve their work (ePractitioners); and iii) eHealth literate citizens – better informed consumers of health services, who are thus transformed from passive observers to active participants in the therapy process; and
- developing the evidence base on eHealth – what works, why and under what
- conditions, and ensuring the sharing and reapplication of this knowledge widely



Recommendations

- Based on the 2009 Nigeria Conference on Telemedicine and eHealth, the following recommendations were highlighted as crucial;
- Strategy and Policy formulation by the Federal Government to facilitate the implementation and sustenance of eHealth in Nigeria
- Government should promote advocacy at all levels of government to get every level of Government involved in eHealth implementation and sustenance.
- Involvement of all stakeholders in Public, Private, Academia, NGOs in eHealth implementation and sustenance
- Government at Federal, State and Local Government levels should create the enabling environment for the implementation and sustenance of eHealth by establishing a coordinating mechanism (eHealth committees or task group).
- eHealth to be integrated into the curriculum of all health training institutions in the country.
- The Government to harmonize the various existing eHealth, telemedicine, tele-health desk officers in government ministries, agencies etc.



Conclusion

- The eHealth revolution is predicated on the triad of people, processes and technology (people are key)
- An organized profession such as SFTeHIN is indispensable to this effort.
- Individual members should get eHealth association started in their various countries.

