

National Digital Health Mission (NDHM)

January 4, 2021

About the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM)

The Prime Minister of India announced its implementation on 15th August 2020 in the country with a vision to create a national digital health ecosystem as proposed in NDHB.

Aim

It aims to develop the backbone necessary to support the integrated digital health infrastructure of the country. It will bridge the existing gap amongst different stakeholders of the Healthcare ecosystem through digital highways.



Objectives

To strengthen the accessibility and equity of health services, including continuum of care with citizen as the owner of data, in a holistic healthcare programme approach leveraging IT & associated technologies and support the existing health systems in a 'citizen-centric' approach, the **NDHM envisages the following specific objectives:**

- To establish **state-of-the-art digital health systems**, to **manage the core digital health data**, and the infrastructure required for its seamless exchange
- To establish **registries** at appropriate level to create single source of truth in respect of clinical establishments, healthcare professionals, health workers, drugs and pharmacies
- To **enforce adoption of open standards by all national digital health stakeholders**
- To create a system of **personal health records, based on**

- international standards, easily accessible to individuals and healthcare professionals** and services providers, based on individual's informed consent
- **To promote development of enterprise-class health application systems** with a special focus on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals for health
 - To adopt the best principles of **cooperative federalism** while working with the States and Union Territories for the realization of the vision
 - To **ensure that the healthcare institutions and professionals in the private sector participate actively with public health authorities** in the building of the NDHM, through a combination of prescription and promotion
 - To ensure **national portability** in the provision of health services
 - To **promote the use of clinical decision support (CDS) systems** by health professionals and practitioners
 - To promote a **better management of the health sector leveraging health data analytics** and medical research;
 - To provide for enhancing the efficiency and **effectiveness of governance** at all levels
 - To support effective steps being taken for ensuring quality of healthcare; and
 - **To strengthen existing health information systems,** by ensuring their conformity with the defined standards and integration with the proposed NDHM.

The current strong public digital infrastructure—including that related to Aadhaar, Unified Payments Interface and wide reach of the Internet and mobile phones (JAM trinity)—provides a strong platform for establishing the building blocks of NDHM. The existing ability to digitally identify people, doctors, and health facilities, facilitate electronic signatures, ensure non-repudiable contracts, make paperless payments, securely store digital records, and contact people provide opportunities to streamline healthcare information

through digital management

Benefits

- The implementation of NDHM is expected to significantly **improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of health service delivery overall.**
- Patients will be able to securely store and access their medical records (such as prescriptions, diagnostic reports and discharge summaries), and share them with health care providers to ensure appropriate treatment and follow-up.
- They will also have access to more accurate information on health facilities and service providers. Further, they will have the option to access health services remotely through tele-consultation and e-pharmacy.
- NDHM will **empower individuals with accurate information to enable informed decision making and increase accountability of healthcare providers.**
- NDHM will provide choice to individuals to access both public and private health services, facilitate compliance with laid down guidelines and protocols, and ensure transparency in pricing of services and accountability for the health services being rendered.
- Similarly, **health care professionals across disciplines will have better access to patient's medical history (with the necessary informed consent)** for prescribing more appropriate and effective health interventions. The integrated ecosystem will also enable better continuum of care.
- NDHM will **help digitize the claims process and enable faster reimbursement.** This will enhance the overall ease of providing services amongst the health care providers.
- **At the same time, policy makers and programme managers will have better access to data, enabling more informed decision making by the Government.**
- Better quality of macro and micro-level data will enable

advanced analytics, usage of health-biomarkers and better preventive healthcare.

- It will also **enable geography and demography-based monitoring and appropriate decision making to inform design** and strengthen implementation of health programmes and policies.
- Finally, researchers will greatly benefit from the availability of such aggregated information as they will be able to study and evaluate the effectiveness of various programmes and interventions.
- NDHM would facilitate a comprehensive feedback loop between researchers, policymakers, and providers.

Implementation

The NDHM is envisaged to be **implemented in phase wise manner.**

- Phase 1 to cover 6 UTs on pilot basis.
- Phase 2 will cover additional States with expansion of the services.
- Phase 3 will target nation-wide roll-out, operationalizing and converging with all health schemes across India along with promotion, on-boarding, and acceptance of NDHM across the country.

Current status

Currently, the NDHM is being implemented in 6 Union Territories (Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Lakshadweep, Ladakh and Puducherry) in Phase: I, on pilot basis. Services like issue of Health ID, creation of registries for Doctors & health facilities and creation of personal health record have been initiated.