



The socio-economic impact of mHealth

mHealth has the potential to benefit society in three ways: Cut the costs of providing healthcare, maintain and improve the quality of care, reach patients in even the most remote locations.

mHealth can increase the reach and efficiency of health care

- Empower the patients. Approximately 30 percent of smartphone users are likely to use wellness apps by 2015. Smartphones can also be used as a tool for patients to manage appointments, renew prescriptions or view medical records.
- Doctors are increasingly using smartphones, allowing them to access medical materials. They can also reach patients in rural areas through remote diagnostics and information alerts via SMS.
- Remotely monitoring hospital patients or the elderly can free up much needed capacity in hospitals and nursing homes.
- mHealth also has the potential to reduce the per capita cost of healthcare, while simultaneously maintaining or improving quality of care.

mHealth can help developing nations by...

- Reaching citizens in the most remote areas
- Helping these countries reach their health targets for their Millenium Development Goals by 2015

mHealth can help mature nations by...

- Unburdening the healthcare systems by relegating part of the care to mobile communications
- Serving elderly patients or those suffering from communicable diseases

mHealth can help everyone by...

- Reducing the pressure on overburdened hospitals, clinics and medical professionals
- Reducing the inequalities based on gender, income or geography
- Increasing the gross domestic product through more healthcare-related employment

A few examples of the potential impact of mHealth

- In Bangladesh, 290,000 mothers infants could be saved each year through an information campaign sent via SMS.
- In Russia, SMS treatment compliance could help cure 50,000 cases of tuberculosis.
- In Hungary, treating certain patients remotely could save 40,000 nights in the hospital.
- In Sweden, remotely monitoring the elderly so they can stay in their homes could save €2.4 billion each year.

The role of telecoms in mHealth

- While the adoption of mHealth will require greater collaboration between the public and private sectors, the telecommunications industry could serve an important role in bringing together the diverse stakeholders.
- Telecoms already have the infrastructure and the technical interfaces needed for mobile health services, such as the mobile network, points of access and the terminals. Telecoms are experienced in understanding customer needs and are capable of creating global solutions quickly.