



Provisional program

Innovative financing for accelerating and strengthening the scale up of digital health systems

1230-2030 Tuesday 5 June 2018 | WP1629

To be held in Washington DC

This event is the second in the Wilton Park series, 'Technology, Innovation and Global Health', which focuses on the opportunities of innovation and technology to improve the health of populations across the globe. It is held in partnership with PATH.

There is widespread acknowledgement that a robust and integrated digital health infrastructure is essential for countries to achieve the health Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Universal Health Coverage (UHC) by 2030.

Here's why: a strong digital health infrastructure ensures that health workers, decision-makers, and other key stakeholders can access the right health information in a timely manner to target services toward the most vulnerable and underserved populations. And that's critical not only for the day to day delivery of health services - it's essential for countries responding to global health shocks and pandemics. It is widely recognised however, that most current approaches to investment in digital health systems are fragmented, siloed, and uncoordinated. Simply put, business as usual is not working.

"The tremendous value and corresponding excitement that digital health provides has come at a cost, as the proliferation of interest and the variety of stakeholders involved has created a fragmented approach to the use of digital tools for health in many countries." (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, 2017).

It is challenging for donors to align their funding and activities to support governments to create effective health information systems that are sustainable beyond the term of any one project or program. This leads to multiple pilot interventions and efforts that have failed to scale. The results are at best inefficient, and at worst hazardous to health outcomes.

"[T]here is a clear need for a paradigm shift in digital health infrastructure investments. The global health community and U.S. global health programs need to move away from the current practice of single application solutions to a more strategic approach that acts holistically with both current country priorities and long term goals." (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM), 2017).

In association with:



This event will consider these challenges, and draw on the collective expertise, insights and perspectives of the participants to explore innovative approaches to financing the development of digital health systems at a national or regional level. We will consider questions such as: What models exist that promote coordinated investment (or even co-investment)? How can we make foreign assistance more effective? What new models need to be created to maximise investments and avoid duplication and wasted costs?

The meeting brings together global health experts from the US Government, private sector (health, technology and finance) organisations and foundations to; 1) better understand what is needed to create successful sustainable financing models for national digital health systems; 2) consider the roles of the significant players in this field in developing or adopting new models; and 3) explore potential catalytic next steps to improve coordination of investments in digital health systems.

Although participants will largely be drawn from a domestic audience, the focus of the dialogue is intentionally on the role these agencies and organisations have in development of digital health systems in low and middle income countries.

Goal and objectives

1. Create a dialogue around the coordination of digital health investment, taking into account recommendations in the NASEM report and the recent USG statement at the WHO;
2. Set the scene for potential new models of investment that open the way to more innovative financing models, with funders and countries working in partnership, and;
3. Provide a platform for further discussion and coordination between USG, private sector and family foundations to respond to those recommendations.

In association with PATH

(Speakers invited and themes proposed * denotes to be confirmed)

Tuesday 5 June

1230-1330

Participants arrive and buffet lunch available

1330-1400

Welcome and introduction

How can digital health support countries to achieve their health SDGs and UHC by 2030? What are the current challenges for donors, private sector organisations and foundations investing in digital health systems. How can donors collaborate more effectively?

Tom Woods

Chairman, Wilton Park USA Foundation, Washington DC

Lesley-Anne Long

Board Member, Wilton Park USA Foundation, Washington DC

1400-1445

1. Financing for digital health in LMICs: what's the current state of play?

The NASEM report recommends that The U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Department of State, and the Department of Health and Human Services

should, together, systematically assess their approach to global health funding with an eye toward making long-term investments in high-impact, country-level programs.

This session will ask: what is needed to encourage donors (including private sector and foundations) to move away from funding that is focused on individual, disease-focused tools which are not interoperable with one another and are duplicative to in-country systems? What are key findings from the NASEM May 2017 report regarding investments in digital health systems?

Carolyn Reynolds

Vice President for Policy and Advocacy, PATH, Washington DC

***Dominic Haazen**

Lead Health Policy Specialist, Health Nutrition and Population Global Practice, The World Bank, Washington DC

1445-1545

2. Promoting donor coordination

The global health community needs to adopt a more strategic approach that meets country and regional priorities and long term goals. By better coordinating the funding for digital health systems, investors in digital health can reduce duplication and ensure that the platforms are more aligned with those priorities and goals.

This session will ask: what will it take for donors to stop funding multiple digital systems for different diseases in the same country? How can donors be encouraged to align their funding to maximise the returns on investments, and achieve better health outcomes? What are the barriers that need to be overcome to achieve donor coordination and co-investment?

David Stanton

Senior Advisor, Global Health, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington DC

Manisha Bhinge

Associate Director Health, The Rockefeller Foundation, New York

1545-1600

Refreshments

1600-1700

3. Financing mechanisms for scalable, interoperable digital health systems

Increasingly donors are acknowledging that business as usual is not working. Discussions at the Wilton Park Digital Health Leadership conference in October highlighted the current fragmentation and duplication of effort, and the burden this places on governments seeking more coordinated approaches to investment in country health priorities.

This session will ask: what examples already exist for coordinating donor investment in digital health systems at national and regional levels? What new mechanisms could be established to support donor co-ordination. What are the roles of the private sector and foundations in supporting coordinated investment in national and regional digital health systems? What are the roles of regional bodies (e.g. WHO Africa, the International Telecommunication Union, IGAD (Inter-Governmental Authority on Development) and WAHO (West Africa Health Organisation)), and regional initiatives (e.g. Digital REACH) as coordinating bodies around which donors can align investments?

Dykki Settle

Director, Digital Health, PATH, Washington DC

Katherine Wilson

Chief Executive Officer, Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL), Washington DC

1700-1750

4. Next steps and commitments

This session sets the stage for participants to propose next steps and/or make commitments to support, promote and take action to increase coordinated investments in digital health systems in LMICs.

Tom Woods

Chairman, Wilton Park USA Foundation, Washington DC

1750-1800

5. Closing remarks

Tom Woods

Chairman, Wilton Park USA Foundation, Washington DC

1815-2030

Reception and dinner

2045

Participants depart

This is a preview program and as such may be subject to change.

This is an invitation only conference.

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