CASE STUDY SERIES 5

Advocated Cases to Facilitate Process Simplification

Case Title: Establishing a Centralized Digital Database for Efficient Healthcare Management in Bangladesh

K.M. Noor-E-Zannat Nadi and Hasan Muhammad Baniamin

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Policy and Innovation Lab (PLab) of South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG), North South University, Bangladesh

Establishing a Centralized Digital Database for Efficient Healthcare Management in Bangladesh

K.M. Noor-E-Zannat Nadi and Hasan Muhammad Baniamin

In Bangladesh, the healthcare sector currently lacks a central database which deprives both service providers and recipients of the advantages associated with such a centralized system. Like many other countries, Bangladesh grapples with issues in healthcare management, such as fragmented data systems, manual record-keeping, and impediments in accessing timely and accurate information.

Managing the Healthcare System in Bangladesh: Current Landscape

In Bangladesh, there are different types of health service providers, such as public and private hospitals, community clinics, and NGOs. In most of the hospitals, there is no database of the patients' medical histories. Some reputed private hospitals in Bangladesh have their own databases that allow patients to access their test reports and prescriptions seamlessly. In most health facilities across Bangladesh, the scenario is characterized by manual record-keeping and fragmented data systems.

The dependence on manual record-keeping exacerbates the challenges faced by healthcare professionals. The manual processes not only consume valuable time but also contribute to the risk of errors and discrepancies in patient data. At times, doctors or hospitals may need to repeat all the tests, resulting in the wastage of medical resources and time. In emergency situations, the lack of instantaneous access to comprehensive patient information can impede timely and informed decision-making, potentially impacting patient outcomes. Some individual healthcare providers maintain their own separate records which often result in redundancies and inefficiencies. The absence of a central database hampers the seamless exchange of information across different healthcare entities, including hospitals, clinics, and diagnostic centers.

Problem

There is no permanent system to keep a patient's medical history.

Solution

A central digital database containing all the information regarding a patient's medical history can be created by synchronizing the data of National Identity (NID) and/or birth registration.

Outcome

Medical services and record management will become more efficient.

Accessibility to timely and accurate health information remains a pressing issue in Bangladesh's healthcare facilities. The absence of a common platform makes it challenging for healthcare providers to retrieve comprehensive patient records, medical histories, and treatment plans promptly. This fragmented approach not only compromises the quality of patient care but also poses obstacles to public health monitoring and policymaking.

A Need for a Paradigm Shift in Healthcare Management

In this situation, we suggest a digital database containing all kinds of medical history for everyone in Bangladesh, which will allow faster access to information and reduce administrative burdens. This database can be created by synchronizing the data of National Identity (NID) and/or birth registration. Along with a central database, the patients can also be provided with a digital health card. Digitalized healthcare services allow patients to view their records, track their health metrics, and participate in shared decision-making with their healthcare providers. Digital health records not only allow better quality healthcare services to patients but also enable seamless communication and coordination among different healthcare providers involved in a patient's care. This helps prevent duplication of tests, ensures timely access to relevant information, and promotes collaboration among healthcare professionals. Moreover, it can also facilitate the implementation of telemedicine services for patients in remote or underserved areas.

A digital health database allows for real-time monitoring of public health trends and disease outbreaks. Researchers can use aggregated and anonymized health data to conduct studies, analyze trends, and identify patterns that can contribute to medical research and the development of new treatments. This can lead to advancements in healthcare and an improved understanding of diseases.

Digital databases can also reduce administrative costs by reducing paperwork, minimizing administrative errors, and preventing unnecessary procedures. This will ensure resource optimization and better financial planning for healthcare organizations. While it is crucial to address privacy concerns, well-designed digital health systems can provide enhanced security measures to protect sensitive patient information. Access controls and encryption can be implemented to ensure data privacy and compliance with relevant regulations.

In the long run, policymakers can use comprehensive health data to make informed decisions, develop effective health policies, and allocate resources strategically based on the actual healthcare needs of the population.

Declarations

About the Authors

K.M. Noor-E-Zannat Nadi is a Research Associate at the South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance, North South University, Bangladesh. She completed her graduation and post-graduation in Economics from the University of Dhaka. Her interests span development economics, international trade and macroeconomics.

Email: noornadi@gmail.com

Dr. Hasan Muhammad Baniamin is an Assistant Professor at the South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance, North South University, Bangladesh. He obtained Ph.D. from the Department of Administration and Organisation Theory, University of Bergen, Norway. He published a number of articles in different journals such as Public Administration, Public Organisation Review, International Political Science Review, and International Journal of Public Administration. Some of his recent publications are:

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Email: hasan.baniamin@northsouth.edu