ABSTRACT

INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 1

Digital Health Technology Trends & Implications for Health Professionals

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The use of digital technologies in health and care is becoming more and more common in the countries analysed.

As regards familiarity with the use of technologies, it differs according to the type of technologies and to the users. For example, users state to be familiar with health-related technologies wearable devices (smartwatch, pedometer), mobile apps (smartphone) and digital technology innovations (platforms), other have a limited knowledge. Digital technologies offer many opportunities in daily work. The interviewees recognize their effectiveness, how technology improves accurateness and stress the importance of individualizing health care technologies.

From the patient's point of view, some people seem to be reluctant and are still used to a more traditional approach to healthcare. Resistance can be summed up to the use of something new or learning new skills required to use the digital technology. However, once the patient sees the relevance and the advantage of the innovation, resistance decreases. When it comes to initiation and implementation of the use of the digital technologies, the process should involve all levels of actors. Initiation happens at the manager level with the involvement of political decision-makers in public administration entities. Furthermore, it is important to involve professionals and end users in all phases of the project, to increase the willingness to accept new technology.

In most cases, patients are able increase their autonomy and self-reliance through the usage of digital technologies, while at the same time, it should be easy to use and user-friendly. In general, health-related technology was considered to be generally helpful, but it takes time to appreciate the benefit coming from the usage of digital technologies in health care. In terms of data collection and processing interviewees show awareness of questions related to sensitive data and privacy; data protection policy. Patients seem mostly comfortable with sharing data, fewer expressed concerns about it and would like to be more informed about their use.