

DIGITAL HEALTH

ENABLING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Significant advances in mobile technologies, network coverage and internet access have opened up great possibilities to improve patient-centered care and public health. Building on more than 110 years of experience in tuberculosis (TB) prevention and care, KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation supports countries to effectively implement digital health solutions to enable healthy communities. By turning data into information and making it available for utilization, we empower decision-making by patients, healthcare workers and national TB programs.

KNCV's Digital Health Assessment Tool

Among the challenges to implementing an effective and sustainable Digital Health approach is the lack of guidance on how to evaluate potential solutions, their purposes, and where within the health system they should operate both at the national and subnational levels. To this end, a Digital Health Assessment was developed by that utilizes the patient pathway framework. Its purpose is to assess existing information systems with associated applications and identify any opportunities and gaps along the patient pathway care seeking, diagnosis and treatment. This allows mapping of needs along the pathway and matching them with existing and potential digital health solutions.

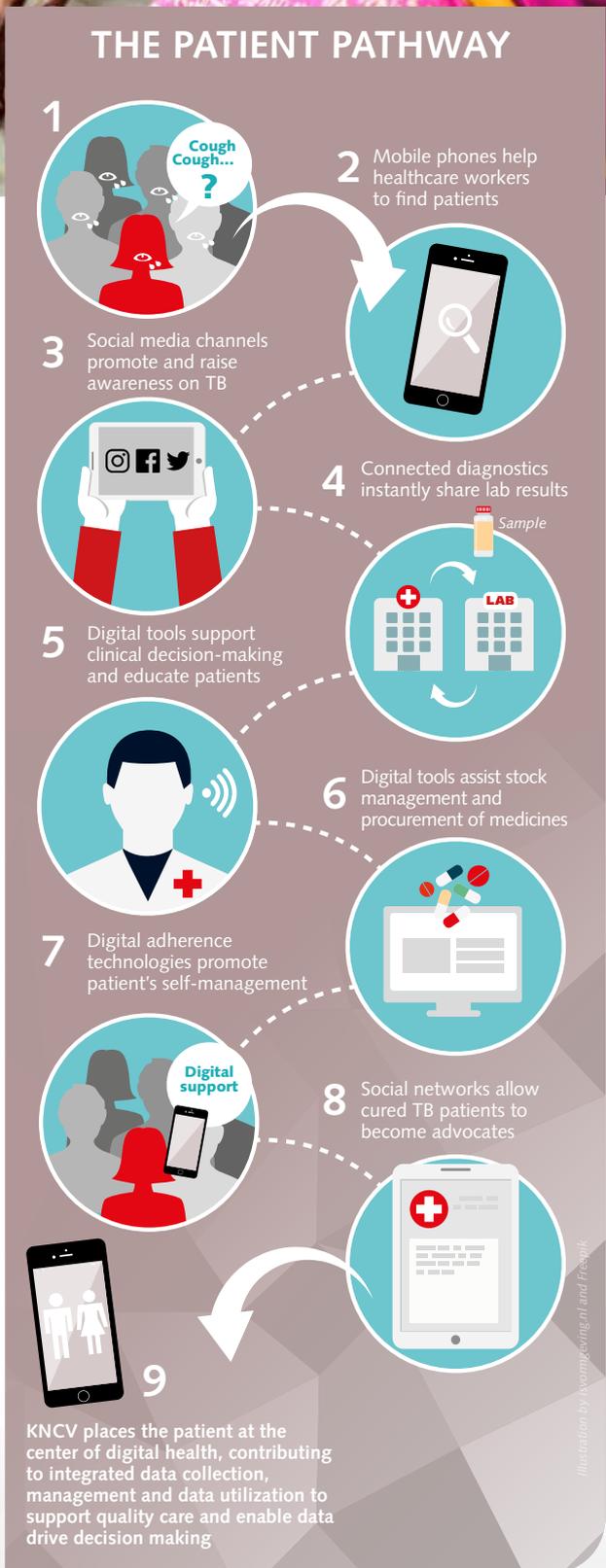


Illustration by ivomgevingari and Freepik



Strengthening data systems and increasing the use of existing data are vital in building resilient and sustainable systems for health.

KNCV APPLIES DIGITAL HEALTH IN THREE AREAS OF WORK:

1. Diagnosis

Rapid and accurate diagnosis of TB is essential to start treatment on time, and ultimately, control of the TB epidemic by limiting transmission. Faster laboratory feedback (to clinician, TB program and patient) can be achieved by connecting diagnostic devices to an online platform, which also supports building better linkages between diagnosis and treatment initiation. KNCV supported the implementation of diagnostic connectivity in several countries and helped National TB programs to build capacity on using the information.

2. Care and treatment support

Care can and should be better informed and differentiated based on the patient need and health system context. Implementation of digital technologies like text short messaging service (SMS), medication event monitoring systems (MEMS) as 99DOTS or electronic medication box, and video-supported treatment (VOT) can support patient self-management and provide information to evaluate treatment modalities. In turn, this can lead to specific interventions and differentiation of care to improve the effectiveness and quality of treatment using relevant incentives (such as the use of food vouchers, mobile money or intensified patient counseling).

QuanTB: The tool that alerts

Take the example of QuanTB: an electronic forecasting, quantification, and early warning tool designed to improve procurement processes, ordering, and planning for TB drugs. A tool that is especially useful now that newly recommended TB medicines and treatment regimen pose challenges to the national TB programs during introduction and scale up. KNCV helps to implement this tool which, when it's used on a regular basis, serves as an early warning mechanism, providing information on actual versus planned consumption, impending expiries, and stock-outs of medicines.

KNCV assists countries in the implementation of digital adherence technologies to inform approaches to differentiated care leading to better treatment and support to patients.

3. Surveillance and monitoring

The collection of up-to-date patient information, including socio-economic and health data, helps in the management of TB outbreaks, the evaluation and improvement of National TB programs and facilitates the execution of regular epidemiological studies. KNCV helps National TB programs to utilize and link information systems to collect information about patients and TB outbreaks in order to guide policy and programmatic activities.

KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation is the world's leading TB expert organization. Established in 1903, KNCV delivers evidence for policy and technical assistance for impact in TB care and prevention worldwide.

Get in touch

Want to learn more about how KNCV supports countries to effectively implement Digital Health solutions? Visit WWW.KNCVTBC.ORG/DIGITALHEALTH

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