



GAUTENG PROVINCE

HEALTH
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MEDIA STATEMENT

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DIGITISATION OF PATIENT FILES SET TO POSITIVELY IMPACT ON PATIENT CARE IN GAUTENG

In an effort to improve the quality of care to patients the Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) has embarked on the digitisation of its paper-based patient records in public hospitals.

The initiative is part of the GDoH's objective to expedite the adoption and proficient utilisation of eHealth system throughout the 37 public hospitals in the province, starting with the digitisation and back scanning of all patient records. A target has been set to digitise a minimum of 800 million patient records within the next 36 months, signifying the magnitude of impact expected from this initiative.

The project is being piloted at Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital and Rahima Moosa Mother and Child Hospital before being rolled out to other facilities.

The eHealth system uses the power of cloud technology which will ensure efficiency and accuracy and offers secure storage of patient records. This centralised system will simplify access and management of medical information, fostering a more efficient and effective healthcare system.

MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko said that the implementation of the eHealth digitisation solution will yield substantial benefits to the Gauteng public healthcare system.

“Our hospitals stand to reduce operational costs associated with traditional paper-based record-keeping, eliminate time wasted on manual patient file searches and establish accurate records essential for legal and litigation purposes. The digitisation and back scanning of patient records will reinforce data security, ensuring seamless compliance with privacy and security regulations,” explained the MEC.

The focus of the digitisation project is on actioning and prioritising records preparation, cleaning and organisation across four primary sections in the hospitals, including maternity services, patient administration, mental health and chronic care management system.

- Patient administration - The eHealth system will ensure efficient patient registration, appointment scheduling and record management, consequently reducing waiting times and improving patient experience.
- Maternity Services - It will implement an integrated digital platform for maternity care, ensuring the tracking and management of prenatal and postnatal care, enhancing the safety and health of mothers and new-borns.
- Chronic care management - Establish a digital chronic care management system that allows for effective tracking and monitoring of patients with chronic illnesses, enabling personalized care plans, and improving health outcomes.
- Mental Health Services: To create a digital framework for mental health services that provides comprehensive data management, facilitates patient monitoring and enhances the coordination of care among mental health professionals.

In addition to this, the eHealth digitisation project has seen the training and employment of 100 young people from local communities by the implementing agent. They are responsible for scanning and capturing of all paper-based patients files and will be employed for the duration of this project.

The digitisation of all paper-based patient files follows the implementation of the Health Information System (HIS) that will allow for one-patient-one-file. Already, the GDoH has successfully implemented three modules of the HIS, which encompass patient administration, billing, finance and revenue that have been seamlessly integrated into all 37 hospitals and 33 Community Health Centres, and the system is fully operational with the clinical module at Mamelodi Hospital and Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital.

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