



20 Nov 2018  
Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel

National University of Singapore's Initiative to Improve Health in Asia (NIHA)

## Digital Health Forum

160

Participants

*government, academia/research, clinical  
healthcare, pharma, healthcare IT, retail  
pharmacy and venture capital backgrounds*

9

Faculty members

*internationally recognised experts from  
academia, pharma, medical devices,  
government and start-up digital health firms*



## Introduction

The National University of Singapore's Initiative to Improve Health in Asia (NIHA) was established in 2010 to progress public health and healthcare delivery in Asia through the three integrated programmes of Leadership Development, Policy Forums and Research.

The NIHA Digital Health Forum (DHF) held on 20 November 2018 brought together key thought leaders from the medical-technology industry, digital health start-up sector, academia and various government agencies to discuss the current digital health landscape in Asia Pacific.

## Objectives

- To provide an overview of digital health initiatives across the Asia Pacific and the regulatory strategies available to ensure proper conduct in this emerging field.
- To provide a platform to generate new ideas for collaborative research between key stakeholders in the digital health sector.

# Executive Summary

The first keynote speaker, Professor Matthew Bellgard (Director, eResearch at Queensland University of Technology), summarised global trends and the impact of digital disruption on research. Digital trends in biomedical research such as shared dynamic registries, “N of 1” trials, clinical trial ready cohorts and adaptive clinical trials require the development of international standards and processes for data collection and governance. This will facilitate increased collaboration across borders in research.



Health care in the age of digital disruption: a digital health solution is not a static ICT system

Professor Matt Bellgard  
Director eResearch  
Queensland University of Technology



**Prof Matthew Bellgard**, Director, eResearch, Queensland University

Professor Eric Finkelstein from the Health Systems and Services Research Programme at Duke-NUS Medical School shared his research on the impact of digital health tools on prevention of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). Many digital health tools for NCDs are measurement tools which, as an intervention, have demonstrated little benefit in creating a habit loop. There is a need to combine such tools with other strategies like incentives and gamification for improving population health.

The forum included a presentation of Australia's National Digital Health Strategy, as well as China's Healthcare Informationalisation efforts and Singapore's Regulatory Sandboxing Telemedicine Programme. Professor Bellgard, shared on behalf of the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA), the roadmap for the Australian plan whose theme is “Safe, Seamless and Secure.” He also shared global digital health initiatives that have been spearheaded by Australia such as the Global Digital Health Partnership which includes 35 countries and the World Health Organisation.

The presentation from China was given by Mr Tian Dongyue, Deputy Division Chief, Dept. of Planning Development and Informationalization, National Health Commission of China. As part of the Healthy China Strategy, China is implementing a five-year plan in healthcare informationalisation. The focus will be on infrastructure integration, data utilisation, regulation and laws and developing a business information system. Although China has made some achievements in the application and development of health and medical big data, there are still some problems such as lack of standardisation, lack of equilibrium, lack of support and lack of security which will be the focus of future health sector reforms.

**Dr Zubin Daruwalla**,  
Health Industries Leader  
PwC South East Asia  
Consulting



**Mr Praveen Raj Kumar**  
Assistant Director  
Regulatory Engagement  
Development & Standard  
Ministry of Health Singapore



**Prof Eric Finkelstein**  
Director, NIHA Research  
and Professor  
Health Services & Systems  
Research Programme  
Duke-NUS Medical School



**Mr Tian Dongyue**  
Deputy Division Chief  
Dept. of Planning Development  
and Informationalization  
National Health Commission of  
China







**Mr Julian Khoo**  
Co-founder & CEO  
Jaga-Me



**Dr Siaw Tung Yeng**  
Founder & CEO  
MaNaDr



**Mr Simon Chunkath**  
IT Director  
Medtronic Inc

The digital health start-up scene in South East Asia is thriving, and our selected speakers from Singapore- based companies, Jaga-Me and MaNaDr, shared their achievements and challenges as they expand their digital health services. The forum also included the perspective of Medtronic to represent challenges faced by large companies who are developing their digital health initiatives.

The forum ended with a lively panel discussion that covered topics from across the spectrum of digital health including regulation harmonisation and convergence, the role of patient-reported outcomes (PROMs), the expanding role of social media in health as well as the cultural and mindset shifts needed in the health sector to harness the digital health revolution.

