Kerala e- Health

Introduction

The eHealth Kerala project is being implemented by the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Kerala, with the help of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India. The aim is to capture the demographic data, automate hospital processes and collate all information into a centralized state health information system through the network to ensure continuity in health care. This ambitious eHealth project of the State government envisages the development of Electronic Health Records (EHR) of the population. The project provides end-to-end automation on all government healthcare institutions, along with the integration of an electronic demographic database. It was launched on 26 January 2018.

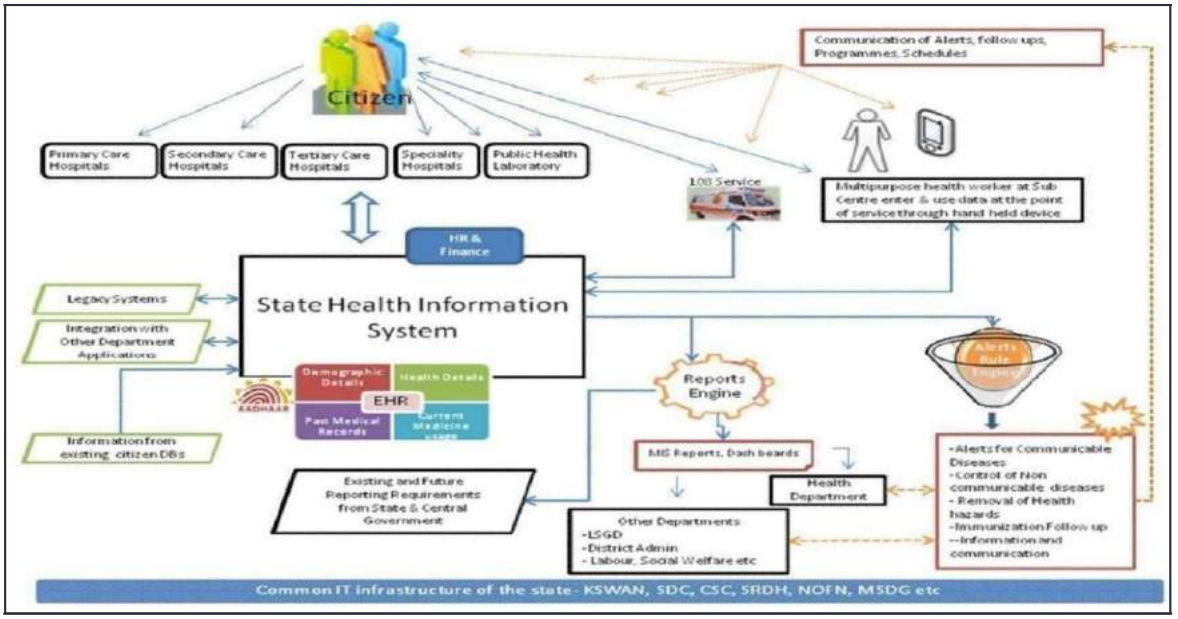
Key Stakeholders

- Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Kerala
- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

Implementation of the practice

- The project is proposed to enable the surveillance of diseases of every person in Kerala. This project uses Aadhaar as the unique identification number.
- The project had a successful run since it was piloted in the Government Medical College Hospital (MCH), Thiruvananthapuram, and other 17 institutions, where all processes, right from outpatient registration, clinical examination and administrative processes, were being fully streamlined utilising the e-Health software.
- The eHealth project has been implemented in 86 government hospitals in the state, including the medical colleges of Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam.
- The program will further be operational in 80 more hospitals.

  The demographic database of 1.41 crore population out of the total 3.5 crore population of the State is also being processed and steps to issue unique health identity cards to them are being initiated.
- The main components of the framework include
  - A Central Repository of Demographic, Public Health and healthcare data pertaining to the State which will get automatically updated.
  - Each citizen's record in the demographic data repository will be uniquely identified which will be used by all the services provided by e-Health Kerala.
  - Centralized Healthcare Information System which has the functionalities of an Integrated Hospital Management System, Disease Surveillance, Management Information System and Healthcare Planning.
  - A high bandwidth reliable network connecting all hospitals (in the public sector) and linking them to Central Healthcare Data Repository and the Central Demographic Data Repository



Results of the practice

The Government expects to create a patient-friendly interface for public healthcare institutions all over the state. The systemic outcome is the availability of a universal database, dynamically updated, along with which government can plan for and monitor the provision of healthcare services. Availability of digital healthcare data in a centralised server will provide a huge impetus for the disease surveillance in the state. Real-time data from clinics will enable timely alerts on outbreaks and communicable diseases. Statistical reports from the Electronic Medical Records (EMR) will provide valuable data on Non-Communicable Diseases and enable State to proactively intervene to reduce the disease burden.

Lesson Learnt

- The scaling up has been a challenge. To get doctors and the staffs use the system even after capacity building has not been efficient
- The continued usage of system and creating a continuous record is difficult. For example- doctors can't keep the patients waiting, if the system is down.
- Cost Effectiveness- there is a need to manage the costs in such a way that the overall cost of health care goes down.
- Information Exchange- the challenge is to motivate and encourage stakeholders to pull as well as push the right kind of information from the system.
- Adoption and Resistance- there is reluctance on the part of patients and doctors in fully adopting E-Health.
- Human Resource- bringing in ANM, Asha workers, Angawadi workers into the e-health

Conclusion

This project aims to create interoperable health care solutions across the state's public health care system which in turn provides a) timely and accurate information for patient care, b) efficient and quality assuring clinical practice for the public healthcare providers. In addition to this, it also helps to gather comprehensive statistics for formulating public health policy.