



# The *Lancet* and Financial Times Commission on Governing health futures 2030: Growing up in a digital world

## Key findings and recommendations for action from the report

Digital technologies and data are changing approaches to health and the design of health systems, but governance models haven't kept up. This has created uneven effects globally, endangered democracy, limited the agency of patients and communities, and compromised trust and human rights.

In 2019, The *Lancet* and Financial Times Commission on Governing health futures 2030: Growing up in a digital world was established to explore how to maximise the benefits and reduce the risks of digital transformations to create better health futures, particularly for children and young people who stand to inherit the governance models designed today.

Nineteen Commissioners from a range of sectors and disciplines were brought together to develop a report. They considered a wide range of governance approaches, ethical guidelines, and institutional responsibilities that must be considered to improve health and wellbeing in an increasingly digital world. The Commission worked closely with Partners to support inclusive dialogues with key stakeholders, with young people and consulted the private sectors through convenings organised by the Financial Times.

The Commission's report, published in October 2021, calls for a radical rethink in approaches to digital transformations in health.

## KEY FINDINGS

# 01

### A value-based framework for governing health futures

All countries are looking to use digital technologies to improve their health services and make better use of their health data. Most countries have already developed digital health strategies, but they are yet to adopt an approach based on data solidarity, digital trust, human rights, accountability, and public participation. These are the keys to advancing universal health coverage, reducing inequities and resolving privacy concerns.

# 02

### Addressing digital determinants of health

Whether a person is healthy is increasingly shaped by their access to affordable digital technologies and how their data is handled. A solidarity approach to health data and addressing digital determinants of health are important for maximising the public health value of digital transformations. However these are missing from most governance approaches.

# 03

### Putting young people at the centre

Young people's experiences growing up in a digital world are just as diverse as their lived experiences. They are excited about the benefits digital transformation will have for their health and wellbeing and concerned about the risks. Despite being uniquely equipped to shape positive health futures, young people's views and needs are almost never prioritised in policy development or technology development.



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## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

### 1 Address the role of digital technologies as determinants of health

- Close digital and health divides by connecting everyone to the internet as a critical way to expand access to health services for the most vulnerable people.
- Reduce the uneven power over digital technologies currently held by tech giants and build the power and agency of young people and their communities to shape the future of digital health.
- Invest in health and education, preparing young people for work, climate action, and the achievement of the SDGs by 2030.

### 2 Build a governance architecture that fosters trust

- Develop stronger policies and laws to promote human rights—including children's rights—in the digital environment including to protect individuals against online harms.
- Improve the involvement of local communities and patients, particularly children and youth, in the design of digital health technologies and policies.
- Increase people's digital, health, and civic knowledge and skills so they can effectively use and understand digital health technologies.
- Fight against health disinformation.

### 3 Govern health data to increase its public value

- Enact a data solidarity-led approach to unlocking the shared public value of data whilst safeguarding individual human rights.
- Agree on universal rules for sharing data to build trust between individuals, health providers, and governments.
- Make global agreements to prevent harmful data collection and use.
- Hold organisations responsible for the collection and use of people's health data. Ensure remedies exist for people whose health data has been misused.

### 4 Invest in the enablers of digital transformations for public health

- Regularly check how prepared a country is to maximise the opportunities (and reduce the risks) of the digital transformations in health.
- Identify and implement the digital health tools and approaches that will have the biggest benefits for people's health.
- Put in place permanent programmes to support ongoing training of the current and future health workforce to be well prepared for digital transformations of health and data-driven health systems.



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