Views from the Top:
HIMSS-Elsevier Digital Healthcare Award participants forecast 2017 Health ICT trends that would impact patient care and outcomes.

Drawing inspiration from their outstanding award submissions this year, twelve industry thought leaders from around the world share their views on: “Which area of health ICT do you see having the greatest impact on healthcare in your region in 2017”? What can organisations do to continue impacting lives and creating a healthier future?

HIMSS-Elsevier Digital Healthcare Award winners and finalists are leading the transformation of care across the entire continuum. They prove that continued commitment to improving care through technology can reap extraordinary benefits. This year’s submissions also showcased a paradigm shift towards greater enterprise-wide interoperability. Through this Award platform, we will continue to showcase organizations at the helm of digital transformation, saving lives and building healthier populations around the world.

Mr. H. Stephen Lieber,
President and CEO,
HIMSS
As a few Gulf Cooperation Council states move towards establishing uniform integrated electronic health records (EHR) and national health insurance plans, and healthcare providers face more challenges in the form of new competition, regulations, and reporting requirements, providers realize that robust ICT systems including EMRs will be essential in overcoming these challenges and turning them into realized opportunities. Over the last few years, the cost and complexity of setting up IT systems have decreased, with the availability of remote support, SaaS and cloud computing. As a result, more EMRs are being implemented across public and private sectors, and we expect the rate to accelerate. This will help providers deliver the highest quality of care at the lowest cost that will benefit both patients and payers.

There is a shortage of trained health personnel around the world, driving the demand for point-of-care information powered by big data analytics. Machine learning (AI) based analytics and intelligence will need to be effectively maximized into every workflow. The inherent need in healthcare to have round-the-clock, omnipresent services at the highest efficiency levels, demands that solutions are available on mobile devices and platforms. The future of healthcare will be driven by mobility, big data analytics and IoT-based devices that will significantly contribute to delivering health services.

The need to have continuous patient engagement that is not limited to hospitalization episodes demands the need for IoT-based devices to augment the care process.

The healthcare industry is increasingly concerned with escalating costs, tightening of regulatory requirements, increased burden of chronic disease, rising patient expectations and improving efficiency. Health information unification and sharing through eHealth that provides a 360º view of medical data and possibilities of telehealth are crucial in addressing current challenges. This makes interoperability the most impactful healthcare ICT aspect in 2017. Building eHealth involves integrating disparate systems and stakeholders involved in private and public healthcare delivery, and adopting common message formats and standards. Access to patient records can also be extended via a secure internet connection to authorized external parties, including hospitals, primary care providers, social services agencies, insurance providers, pharmacies and independent consultants.

Artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT), automation and robotics will have the greatest contribution to the healthcare IT in the upcoming years in the region and worldwide. Big data analytics and cloud technology will help in creating a more efficient and safe healthcare systems, with new and innovative means of analyzing unprecedented amount of data from various parts of the world. Technologies such as Innovative Smart Devices (Wearables and mHealth applications) and predictive analytics will have the potential to revolutionize healthcare through remote monitoring, disease management, and early disease detection. A lot of challenges will arise from such advancement in technology, and most are human factors. Patient confidentiality, cyber security, and data governance. Competent workforce is crucial to driving technology through the interpretation and manipulation of data and enable better interoperability between the different platforms.
Over the last decade, health ICT has undeniably been an important factor in moving the industry forward in Thailand and other ASEAN countries. With Thailand being home to two EMRAM Stage-6 hospitals – Paknampo Hospital being the first to receive this recognition – health ICT is certainly on the upward trend in the country. We anticipate 2017 being the year where there is an increase in the adoption of EMR, which can improve the quality of care, reduce medical errors and enhance the speed of care delivery. We also expect to see homegrown health ICT solutions, customized to our unique culture as well as the rise of big data and analytics for predictive, precision and personalized medicine.

The effect of our ageing population, coupled with the increasing number of citizens with chronic diseases pose a great challenge for both the wellbeing of the citizens and our public healthcare institutions. One area of health ICT – SmartHealth or eHealth, offers a solution to this challenge. By providing a platform to seamlessly connect, digitize and analyze health data and allow for collaboration between citizens and care providers, we will be able to provide affordable, quality and sustainable healthcare for our citizens. Citizens will also be empowered to take ownership of their health, which is critical to the prevention and delay of the progression of chronic diseases.

JurongHealth is honoured to have received the HIMSS Elsevier award which recognizes the integrated health IT landscape in our regional health cluster. We hope to leverage on this platform to derive value for our stakeholders, clinicians and patients in this increasingly complex health IT environment. Once again, we would like to thank HIMSS Elsevier for giving JurongHealth this prestigious award and hope that the healthcare sector will continue to push the healthcare IT boundaries for our patients and clinicians. With an aging population, growing burden of chronic disease and finite healthcare resources, the challenge will be to use health information technology to augment the capabilities of our patients and healthcare providers. This can be in the form of patient portals which empower the patient with information, population health to monitor the status of certain chronic diseases, so that healthcare resources can be utilised judiciously and data analytics to point our limited resources into high value areas.

Winners and finalists of the HIMSS-Elsevier Digital Healthcare Awards have demonstrated how smart and innovative deployment of the right technology can make a real difference in advancing patient care, safety and improve operational efficiencies. Through this platform, we continue to encourage innovative and inspiring entries that harness the transformation and operational efficiencies. Through this platform, we continue to encourage innovative and inspiring entries that harness the transformation and operational efficiencies. Through this platform, we continue to encourage innovative and inspiring entries that harness the transformation and operational efficiencies.