

South Africa Country Report



Philips' fourth annual Future Health Index is based on a survey of over 15,000 individuals* that represent the adult general population and over 3,100 healthcare professionals across 15 countries. It explores digital health technology's impact on the patient and healthcare professional experience. After analyzing the data, three clear themes have emerged:



Engaged and digitally enhanced healthcare professionals

The increasing number of healthcare professionals who use technologies like digital health records (DHRs) and telehealth see better results and higher job satisfaction.



Empowered patients – access to data, more control

Individuals with access to their own health data are far more likely to engage with that information in ways that improve the quality of care and their overall experience.



Learning from forerunners

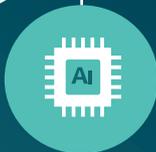
The experiences of digital health technology forerunners like China, Saudi Arabia, India and Russia provide lessons that all countries can apply.

*Individuals: the general population of the 15 countries studied. They represent the population which healthcare systems ultimately serve, including current patients, previous patients, those with chronic conditions and those with limited prior interactions with the healthcare system.

Digital healthcare professionals removing barriers and adapting to new ways of working.



When South African healthcare professionals are supported by digital technology, their working experience improves.



35% use AI technologies within their healthcare practice.
46% 15-country average
Base: Total healthcare professionals



40% of healthcare professionals are using digital health records (DHRs) in their hospital/ practice.
76% 15-country average
Base: Total healthcare professionals

74%

of South Africans did not visit a healthcare professional when they had a medical reason to go.
71% 15-country average
Base: Total individuals

38%

are open to remote consultations for non-urgent care.
44% 15-country average
Base: Total individuals



Telehealth is an untapped tool for healthcare professionals and makes access to healthcare easier and more convenient for individuals.



Digital health technologies benefit healthcare professionals and individuals' experiences, with healthcare professionals reporting that their experience has been positively impacted over the past five years from data-related updates.

Reciprocal data sharing is not yet the norm in South Africa.

So more momentum is needed to increase the adoption and usage of digital health technology in South Africa to fully realise the potential.

Empowered Patients want access to data and more control.

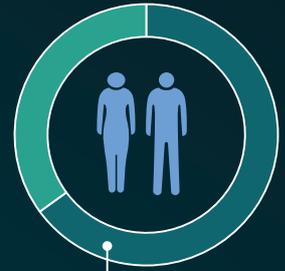
86%

of South Africans believe they have a role to play in their health.



58%

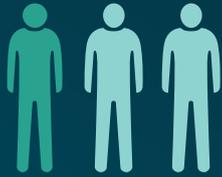
of South African healthcare professionals agree that patients having access to their own health data (including test results, prescriptions, scans etc.) has positively impacted their patients' experience.



65%

South African patients want ownership of their health data.

Empowered patients are more proactive and collaborative with healthcare professionals when they have **ownership of their health data**.

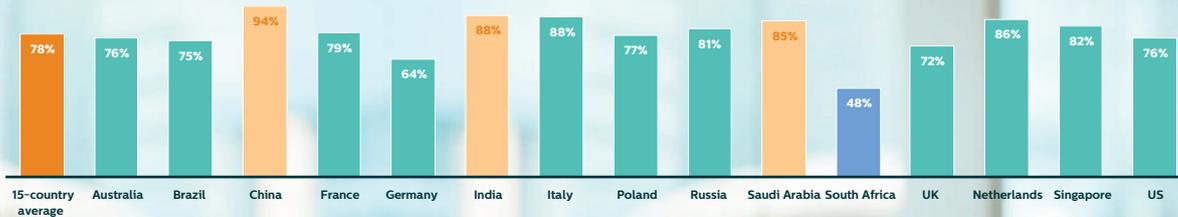


Almost a third of those who do not use digital health technology or mobile health apps, say they would start using them if they were trained on how to use them or if they were assured that their health data would be secure.

But **cost and security** concerns hinder adoption.

We can learn from Forerunners who are moving steadily from gaining access to healthcare technology, to using it – mainly **China, India and Saudi Arabia**.

Percentage of healthcare professionals who currently use any **digital health technology** or **mobile health apps**:



Base: Total healthcare professionals

Forerunner countries have used technology to overcome availability challenges. **Telehealth** adoption is higher among healthcare professionals in countries with low physician density, perhaps due to a **demand for an alternative solution**.



73% of healthcare professionals believe we don't have the infrastructure in place to support the NHI.

65%

of South Africans believe the real challenge is accountability to improve the effectiveness of the local healthcare.



Incorporating new technologies into healthcare is a journey, not a one-time event.

Health systems are in continuous transformation, and so are the digital healthcare technologies that countries are adopting. We need to enable healthcare professionals and patients to adapt as needs evolve and new challenges arise. That is why, as the challenges and needs evolve from country to country and certain barriers fall away, **healthcare professionals and patients must adapt as they adopt** new technologies, learning and adjusting as they go. Focus on enhancing South Africa's healthcare infrastructure as a way to evolve the National Health Insurance (NHI) is needed.

The Future Health Index is commissioned by Philips

Base sizes: South Africa: Total healthcare professionals (n=200), 15-country average: Total healthcare professionals (n=3,044), South Africa: Total General Population (n=1,007), 15-country average: Total General Population (n=15,114), South Africa: Total General Population with public health coverage (n=644)