The impact of new digital health standards on hospitals across India
National Accreditation Board for Hospitals (NABH)’s digital health assessment framework

Background

• This is a fast-evolving digital healthcare ecosystem in India, which has been expediated by various Government initiatives.
• Currently, India's healthcare providers are using internationally available assessments that are more aligned to international standards.
• Such models provide limited insights to digital components from an Indian context.
• The NABH has developed digital health standards to evaluate the digital maturity of Indian healthcare providers.
• PwC India provided their inputs for the creation of the digital health standards.

Features

- Aligned to patient-centric delivery and access to information
- Founded on leading practices in digital health assessment and adapted to Indian healthcare requirements
- Ascending levels of digital maturity to aspire healthcare providers to achieve higher digital adoption in their processes
- Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) requirements incorporated as digital health objective elements to ensure compliance by hospitals

Design principles for digital health maturity assessment

- Digital maturity to be assessed based on both clinical and non-clinical functions in the hospital
- Three maturity levels namely silver, gold and platinum to assess the overall digital maturity of hospitals
- Based on NABH's existing accreditation model for easy adoption by healthcare organisations
- Unified set of objective elements for all segments of hospitals, irrespective of geography, ownership and size
- Atomic objective elements – one element assesses only one aspect of digital maturity
- Digital maturity assessment – quantitative in nature and gives a score indicating the maturity level
Digital health assessment framework: An overview

The framework enables the assessment of digital health maturity for any level of digital accreditation selected by the healthcare provider.

**Best practices**
The framework incorporates best practices from various international standards which are validated by pilot study results and health experts.

**Scale**
The digital maturity is scored on a three-point digital maturity scale. This scale is a sequence of distinct levels of maturity that reflect digital adoption in any healthcare process.

**Pillars**
Digital Maturity is assessed around eight digital dimensions. These dimensions are divided into measurable digital objective elements, categorised into core, commitment, achievement and excellence.

**Maturity**
There are three ascending levels of digital maturity – silver, gold and platinum.

**Continuous monitoring**
To ensure continuous monitoring and sustainable maturity levels, two categories of key performance indicators (KPIs) – clinical and digital – have been formulated, which would have to be adhered to by healthcare organisations.

### Three levels of digital health maturity

**Silver**
- Digital maturity for all mandatory objective elements
- 60% digital maturity for 'commitment' objective elements

**Gold**
- Digital maturity for all mandatory objective elements
- 60% digital maturity for 'commitment' and 'achievement' objective elements

**Platinum**
- Digital maturity for all mandatory objective elements
- 60% digital maturity in all other objective elements
## Impact of the NABH digital health standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patients</th>
<th>Health care providers</th>
<th>National health infrastructure</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Empowered patients with the freedom to choose a digitally mature organisation</td>
<td>• Well-defined and standardised processes</td>
<td>• Digitised healthcare ecosystem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improved patient care due to increased virtual means</td>
<td>• Easier stock/inventory management</td>
<td>• Faster and more accessible care</td>
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<td>• Reduction in medical errors</td>
<td>• Decreased turnaround time due to automated processes</td>
<td>• Enhanced interoperability</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reduced waiting time due to automated registration and admission processes</td>
<td>• Brand value enhancement due to digital accreditation</td>
<td>• Consistent quality standards</td>
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<td>• Voice of the patient captured through feedback leading to quality care of delivery</td>
<td>• Digitally empowered organisation with stringent security standards</td>
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Eight pillars of digital health maturity

Approximately 180 objective elements span the scope of the pillars, which in turn are divided into mandatory (core) and non-mandatory (commitment, achievement and excellence) elements.

Assess assessment and continuity of care
- Adoption of technology and functional capabilities to manage patient registration, appointment, admission and discharge
- Digital solution to educate and capture patient feedback

Management of medication
- Presence of digital solution to manage stock movement of medicines and consumables
- Digital records for pharmacy orders and adoption of digital solutions to reduce medication incident errors

Digital operations management
- Presence of IT policy to guide usage and operation of digital resources
- Adoption of digital tools to facilitate IT asset management and governance
- Disaster recovery plan to ensure continuous patient care

Human resource management
- Maturity of digital tool to manage human resources-related day-to-day administrative tasks
- Adoption of digital tool to manage recruitment-and separation-related activities

Patient care
- Digital solutions to manage tele-consultation, blood bank and patient surgeries

Digital infrastructure
- Digital solutions to manage availability of necessary information technology infrastructure to run digital operations of healthcare facilities
- Maturity in security controls to prevent security breach

Finance and procurement management
- Adoption of technology to manage digital supply chain for the healthcare facility
- Digital tools to manage vendor and customer payments

Information management system
- Presence of data governance, including data standards adoption in digital processes, and availability of data-driven decision-making process
## How to embark on your digital transformation journey?

<table>
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<th>Understand existing digital maturity and assess the level to apply for.</th>
<th>Regularly evaluate digital maturity through digital KPIs via dashboards.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receive benefits from the panel of health informatics which will conduct continuous learning sessions on next-level digital strategies.</td>
<td>Use self-assessment tool to identify the tentative digital maturity level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leverage industry-benchmarked digital landscape to improve business operations.</td>
<td>Develop robust digital ecosystem to optimise business operations.</td>
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For details of the Digital Health Standards, please scan

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