

Provisional agenda: Data and innovation: draft global strategy on digital health

Statement

Thank you chair for this opportunity to address the EB. This MMI statement is supported by PHM.

We note the expanding prevalence of digital healthcare. Health digitalization is a double-edged sword: it can bring societal benefits through more efficient care and health management, but the misuse and exploitation of human and societal data is a concern. We urge MS and the WHO secretariat to acknowledge and address the risks related to misappropriation of data, including the eventual control of digital health systems by corporations.

Aggregated health data should be governed by systems of collective ownership aimed at strengthening fair and equitable health systems. We urge MS to demand that SO1 includes global instruments for people's individual and collective rights over their health data. We urge MS to mandate the WHO to provide guidance and capacity building to countries to develop public health data ownership infrastructures and laws and institutions to protect them. We are concerned that the platform under SO1.2 can marginalize public health concerns in the corporate interest by giving equal say to big tech companies. SO3.1 states that health data should be treated as a global public health good and outlines principles of equitable sharing.

However, the draft is silent on ownership and benefit sharing. We are concerned by a 'right to access data' without corresponding obligations of sharing the benefits.

We are concerned that the draft lacks an analysis of trends, opportunities, risks, and levers that shape developments in this field. We welcome the creation of a Digital Health Technical Advisory Group and urge MS to mandate it to submit a detailed report towards the WHA. The DHS is not matured to be adopted. We urge MS to demand its revision.