



Jamaica



North East Regional Health Authority

Describe a successful or challenging e-health initiative your county has taken.

No initiative reported on.

What were the financial challenges and costs associated with the implementation of this programme?

No initiative reported on.

What have been the main technological challenges to implementing e-health in your country?

Implementation is still in very embryonic stages. Major challenges may include:

- ✦ *'Technophobia' among policy makers in lead agencies*
- ✦ *Unavailability of broadband internet access in more rural areas*
- ✦ *Establishing electronic and computer equipment in relatively unsecured locations, both rural and urban with increasing security costs*

Have any ethical issues been raised during the design an implementation of e-health programmes?

Not applicable.

Has the implementation of e-health programmes required any legal or regulatory changes?

For e-health to be implemented, there are policy and medico-legal issues to be addressed, in particular for the following:

- ✦ *Telemedicine*

Acceptance of a digital imagery for reading the film or videotaped radiological procedure and acceptance of CME credits via online self-paced training.

- ✦ *Electronic Medical Records*

Unique identifiers; government policy regarding Tax Registration Numbers (TRNs) or National Registration number; data security and access issues.

South East Regional Health Authority

Describe a successful or challenging e-health initiative taken

The South East Regional Health Authority has developed a 'Food Handlers System', which is a database of all persons and organisations viz hotels, restaurants, bars, nightclubs etc.

The system facilitates better management of the employees involved in providing this service to the public.

What are the financial challenges and costs associated with implementation of this programme?

Challenges included funding for development and deployment of the system.

Development involved the analysis, design and programming of the system. Ensuring stability and user friendliness, while providing the necessary system controls.

Funding was required for the necessary software and for the support staff and for training.

The project was funded by the National Health Fund.

What have been the main technological challenges to implementing e-health in your country?

The recurring cost of the technology, even though available. A massive training exercise was carried out in the use of the system. Also the necessary hardware was purchased and deployed for the most efficient use.

Have any ethical issues been raised during design and implementation of e-health programmes?

There were some concerns about the storage and use of peoples signatures.

Has the implementation of e-health programmes required any legal or regulatory changes?

Training and certification procedures for handlers were modified, however the actual documentation for procedures has not yet been amended to reflect the changes.

What have been the outcomes of e-health initiatives?

The system has been in operation for the past three years, and has proven to be invaluable, other regional health authorities have adopted similar ones and another Caribbean country, Belize has also evaluated it.

Benefits derived include:

- ✦ *Improved customer satisfaction*
- ✦ *Improved data capture and analysis*
- ✦ *Reduction in fraudulent use of the card, and in other illegal operations*
- ✦ *Income generation.*

Southern Regional Health Authority

Describe successful or challenging e-health initiatives taken by your country?

The Southern Regional Health Authority implemented an e-health system by establishing a network infrastructure.

The first phase of the system has been initiated and is working quite well. The system in place provides access to five hospitals and three health departments.

The following benefits have been derived from this initiative:

- ✦ *All staff who have access to a computer can browse the internet*
- ✦ *Each staff member in the region can be assigned an email address including clinical staff (that is nurses, doctors, physicians, etc)*
- ✦ *Developing a culture where managers and other staff use the information technology system for major communications through the regional health authority's email system*
- ✦ *Extending access to the region's intranet for example for notices and general information*
- ✦ *Use of roaming devices to assist with customer service.*

In summary, implementing this initiative has now provided a platform which can accommodate the use of information systems within the Southern Regional Health, Authority. It is envisaged that other benefits will be derived which will further enhance the services of the region.

What were the financial challenges and costs associated with implementation of this programme?

The Southern Regional Health Authority project was funded by the National Health Fund (NHF). The National Health Fund is funded by the government and private sources.

What have been the technological challenges to implementing e-health in your country?

We are not yet fully oriented towards networked global thinking in our health System and are therefore not technologically driven. We need to develop and sustain a system that supports improved health care locally, regionally and worldwide by using information and communication technology. We need to perceive technology as an added tool to facilitate improved efficiency in the delivery of health care and not as a 'monster' waiting to expose us.

Have any ethical issues been raised?

Not applicable.

Has the implementation of e-health programmes required any legal or regulatory changes?

Yes, the confidentiality of data issue. Our laws will need modification in order to change the present system for storing medical records from hard copy format to soft copy format.

Also the present system for the issue of receipts to patients which are written by hand is to be changed to printed receipts, amendments or new regulations would be required.

What have been the outcomes of e-health initiatives?

The e-health initiative taken by the Southern Regional Health Authority to establish a network infrastructure has been successful and represents progress so far as it provides a foundation of a robust and upgradeable system.

The region is now able to deliver services at the point-of-care.

Regional Health Authority Task Force**Describe a successful or challenging e-health initiative your country has taken.**

- ✦ *Developed a web-based Electronic Health Record System (EHRS) for application throughout the Health Sector Software: UNIMEDICS*
- ✦ *Developed all specifications for building a multi-services IP backbone infrastructure for deploying a comprehensive Telehealth Network throughout Jamaica*
- ✦ *Research and development (R & D) project 'The National Telemedicine Project'.*

What were the financial challenges and costs associated with the implementation of this programme?

Major challenges with funding for:

- ✦ *R & D project*
- ✦ *Venture capital with project outcomes*
- ✦ *Partnerships with commercialisation of project*
- ✦ *Funding for further development.*

What have been the main technological challenges to implementing e-health in your country?

Broad-based infrastructure:

- ✦ *Needs further deregulation to enable affordable costs to enable ubiquitous use of patients*
- ✦ *Technological challenges e.g. training (funding) in new applications targeted to stakeholders*
- ✦ *Policy issues which influence norms and standards and the tardiness of the bureaucracy.*

Have any ethical issues been raised during the design and implementation of e-health in your country?

These ethical issues are well known and are built into the design of the software.

Those issues which are not software dependent will be dependent on the amount of resources available to stakeholders training and technological applications and solutions.

Has the implementation of e-health programmes required any legal or regulatory challenges?

There are no major legal or regulatory changes at this time.

What have been the outcomes of your e-health initiatives?

Presently we are the deployment of EHR in the management of chronic disease for the National Health Fund which will be deployed throughout the National Health Service System.