

Necessity of Policy Making for Mobile Health in Iran's Health System

Dear Editor,

Mobile health (mHealth) has many advantages and has become much more prominent in health systems due to the rapid development of artificial intelligence. However, Rahimi *et al.* (2022)^[1] showed that the use of mHealth software is not common among Iranian nurses and patients. Considering that nurses are the largest part of the healthcare workforce, the effect of using mHealth programs by nurses is very important for the future of modern healthcare. The absence of an appropriate information technology infrastructure, weakness culturalization of the use of mHealth services, the high expenses of maintaining health information technology, and inadequate budget allocation are among the challenges in the field of mHealth.^[2]

Some of the suggested solutions to quicken the development of the mHealth industry in Iran's healthcare system include holding educational workshops and providing support to leading-edge knowledge-based companies. In this area, using social and national media as a platform for culturalization can be an accelerator. Drawing in private sector investment and offering tax incentive packages for leading companies will develop mHealth technology. A transnational strategy would be to establish a regional bank in the field of mHealth in West-Asian countries to facilitate knowledge and experience.^[1-3]

Probing of the adopted policies in Iran shows items such as the enactment of the Supreme Health Council (2008/09/23) and the enactment of the government cabinet (2009/01/18); however, unfortunately, the long-term objectives of these two strategic programs have remained unfulfilled for more than 10 years.^[3] In addition, despite acts in Iran's sixth 5-year development plan to support eHealth services, one of the main obstacles to health policymaking in Iran is the legislation's weakness. Policymakers in Iran should pay serious attention to financial and privacy laws, which is one of the basic risks when legislating on digital health. Considering the experiences and current acts in developed countries, it is necessary to carry out a thorough comparative study to compile comprehensive national laws in the area of electronic and mHealth in Iran. The development of eHealth and mHealth technology is unquestionably an example of e-government. It is now time for governance to take on a more active role in the form of macro- and micro-level policymaking functions, regulation, facilitation, and supply of hardware and software infrastructure services in the mHealth area.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

Nothing to declare.

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DOI:

10.4103/ijnmr.ijnmr_383_23

How to cite this article: Musarezaie A, Bahrami M, Ebadi A, Beigi-Harchegani H. Necessity of policy making for mobile health in Iran's health system. *Iran J Nurs Midwifery Res* 2025;30:274.

Submitted: 06-Dec-2023. **Revised:** 24-Apr-2024.

Accepted: 30-Apr-2024. **Published:** 10-Mar-2025.

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