[Nepal]

Present Progress of Information Technology in Health Care System of Nepal[*1]

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Nepal is the landlocked multiethnic, multilingual, multi-religious country with India in the Southern, Eastern, Western sides and China in the northern side. It is divided into three ecological zones, the lowland, the midland and the highland.

Information Technology (IT) has been proven a pioneering technology for the lives of people all around the world. IT is a basic infrastructure necessary for economic and social development of a country by which it can support the central nervous system of complex societies, transmitting and processing information and commands among the various parts of such societies.

With IT, individuals can see and share valuable information online. Patients in remote villages can see their specialist online rather than traveling for hours to the nearest clinic. Schoolteachers can download educational materials and lesson plans for their classes. IT is improving access to healthcare is through the availability of geographical information systems through digitized maps, aerial images, and geographic data.

The National Health Policy 1991 has been a bench mark in the history of Health Care Delivery system in Nepal through decentralization and regionalization of Health Services and recognition of private sector in health system.

The current Management Information System of Nepal includes Health Management Information System which was implemented in Nepal from Fiscal Year (FY) 1995/96 by the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) to strengthen management of health facility and to receive standard information. This section manages health service information from community to the Department of Health Services (DoHS) through predefined process and procedure. This system is almost 19 years old robust and well set that provide base for planning, monitoring and evaluation of Health system at all levels. It provides information about achievements, coverage, continuity and quality of health services on monthly basis. Logistic Management Information System (LMIS) is a unit at Department of Health Services receives reports from all health facilities on supply, consumption and stock level of selected essential drugs and commodities. There is web based LMIS since 2009/10 and is in gradual manner.

Human Resource Information System (HuRIS) started from 1994 for the management of information of health worker in the country focusing on computerized personal record system. Drug Information Network is started by Department of Drug Administration from 1991 with the publication of Drug Bulletin of Nepal. It is used to develop and disseminate information on drug. Rural Telemedicine Program is prioritized during three-year interim plan (2007/08-2010/11) which was started from 25 districts and started in hospital of hilly and mountainous districts of Nepal from 22nd January 2011 and further extended to reach 30 districts. Pilot programs like SMS reporting of neonatal health information and malaria surveillance in certain pilot districts through Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs).

The benefits of information technology are access to Health Service of rural people, increase in quality of health services, increased availability of information for health planning as well as increased effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation of public health programmes.

There are some challenges in Present prog-

ress of Information Technology in Public Health System of Nepal too such as cost of health service, nationwide wide coverage of IT, Handling of personal level information and security of the information.

Present progress of Information Technology in Public Health System of Nepal

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Background

- The National Health policy 1991 has been a bench mark in the history of Health care delivery system in Nepal.
  - Decentralization of Health Service
  - Recognition of Private sector in health system

Current Situation

1. **Health Management Information System(HMIS):**
   - Dept. of Health Services established HMIS since 1994
   - Manages information on health services mainly through government health facilities.
   - Monthly basis
   - Web based HMIS up to District level

Current situation:

2. **Logistics Management Information System (LMIS)**
   - LMIS unit at Dept. of Health Services receives reports from all health facilities on supply, consumption and stock level of selected essential drugs and commodities.
   - Web Based LMIS since 2009/10 in gradual manner

Current situation:

3. Human Resource Information System (HuRIS)
- Started from 1994 for the management of information of health workers
- Focusing on computerized personnel record system

Current situation:

4. Drug Information Network
- Dept. of Drug Administration started from 1991 with the publication of Drug Bulletin of Nepal
- Drug Information Network : to develop and disseminate information on drug

Current situation:

5. **Rural Telemedicine Programme:**
- prioritized during three-year interim plan (2007/08-2010/11)
- Started from 25 district hospitals of hilly and mountainous districts of Nepal from 22nd January 2011 and further extended to reach 30 districts

6. **Other pilot programs:**
- SMS reporting of neonatal health information and malaria surveillance in certain pilot districts through Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs)

National ID

- Recently some works has been started for the establishment of National Identification system
- Government is planning to use the information gathered by Election Commission for Nation ID

Benefits and Challenges of IT in Health care

Benefits
- Access to Health service of rural people
- Increase in quality of health services
- Increased availability of information for health planning
- Increased effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation of public health programmes

Child Labour

- Government of Nepal is committed to eliminate all exploitative forms of Child Labour. This commitment is duly expressed through the ratification of the ILO Convention No. 138 ,182 and Child Right Convention of United Nations. Besides, there are activities underway under several ministries to really catch the spirit of these conventions and realisation of the objective of elimination of child labour.
- National Master Plan has also emphasised on the issue and incorporated many activities for the development of child and elimination of child labour.

Challenges

- Cost of health service
- Nationwide coverage of IT
- Handling of personal level information
- Security of the information

Thank You for your kind Attention.