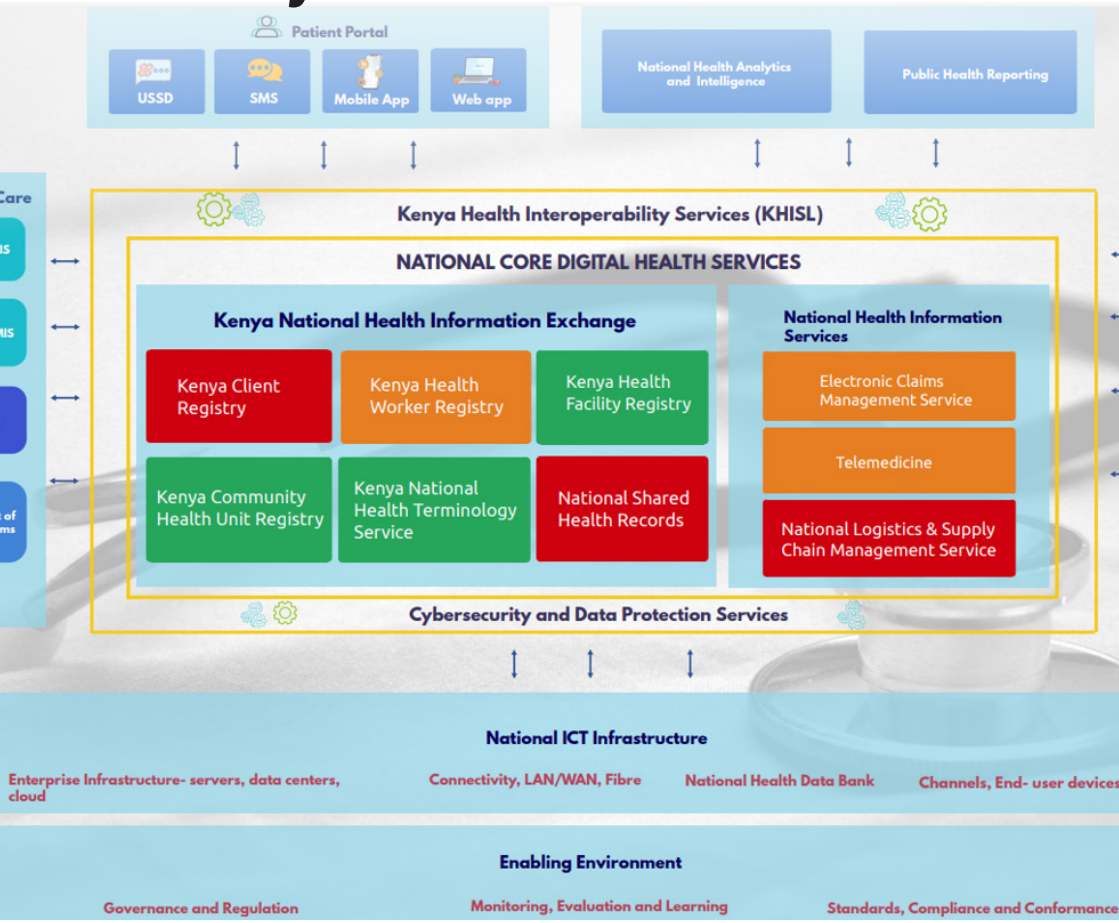


# Position paper on the digital superhighway and the standardization of digital health from the perspective of the Kenya Healthcare Federation



# INTRODUCTION


The Kenya Healthcare Federation (KHF) recognizes the critical importance of harnessing technological advances to improve healthcare delivery and outcomes in Kenya. The transition to standardization of digital health data to enhance health information exchange presents both opportunities and challenges in the digital transformation of Kenya's health system.

As the umbrella body bringing together private sector players in healthcare, the KHF is keenly aware of the potential of the "digital superhighway" to leapfrog progress. Digital health records, telemedicine, artificial intelligence, mobile health applications, and data analytics promise greater efficiency, access, and quality in healthcare. The necessity brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated Kenya's adoption of these digital health solutions

2

However, significant obstacles remain in fully optimizing these technologies. Limitations include a lack of supporting infrastructure such as reliable electricity and internet connectivity, high costs of technologies, lack of skilled personnel, and privacy/security concerns over patient data. There are also interoperability challenges with the existence of multiple disconnected systems and datasets.

KHF supports the standardization of digital health data to encourage health information exchange through one single point of reference and adopting the use of Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR). FHIR profiles should be created to address all applicable use cases across the health information exchange, the FHIR profiles documentation and testing points should be developed then shared in good time before rollout.



KHF commends the Ministry of Health for setting up Kenya Healthcare Terminology Service and providing forums for the private sector to participate in setting up of this critical service. KHF thus recommends the following strategic priorities for the Ministry of Health as related to the digital superhighway and ICD migration:

1. Develop a comprehensive digital health policy and strategy with actionable targets, timelines, and budgets. This should guide counties and private sector players on digital health roadmaps.
2. Significantly enhance capacity building by increasing training institution intake for health information officers/managers, data scientists, and other digital health cadres. Also, bolster training of existing health workforce on using health technologies.
3. Enhance the eLearning portal to train the healthcare workforce on the new digital initiatives and allow the completion of the eLearning course to go into continued medical education points.
4. Form strategic public-private partnerships between leading tech innovators and county health facilities to pilot and scale high-impact digital health solutions, including around ICD-11 implementation.
5. Increase investment in internet connectivity and stable electricity in healthcare facilities through incentives for private sector involvement.
6. Develop clear ethical, legal, and technology frameworks for data protection and cybersecurity in digital health systems.

The KHF reiterates its commitment to supporting the Ministry of Health in Kenya's digital health transformation agenda. This includes lending private sector expertise towards harnessing the digital superhighway and leveraging ICD-11 adoption to achieve quality universal health coverage.

# Kenya Healthcare Federation

## Position paper on the digital superhighway and the standardization of digital health from the perspective of the Kenya Healthcare Federation



**Kenya Healthcare**  
Federation

The Health Sector Board of KEPSA