Asia Pacific Electronic Health Records Conference 2019
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The Next Big Thing in eHealth

HA Go: The Hospital Authority Mobile App for the Public

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Introduction

One of the Hospital Authority (HA)'s strategic objectives is to improve patients' experience and health outcome through patient engagement.   A number of patient mobile apps have been developed in the past few years to support various important heatlhcare activities.   Most of these apps are well received by the public.   However, patients need to adapt to different interfaces as they are developed separately.

A common patient app platform (HA Go) is built in 2019 so that patients can safely access HA services with unified user experience.   HA Go connects patients with healthcare professionals whilst they are at home.   Core features, such as, appointments, accessing one's health record, and settling payment are applicable to all patients.   Specific apps that are applicable to individual patients can be added as required.

Challenges

The development of HA Go cannot be achieved without the solid foundation of her enterprise wide EMR - the Clinical Management System (CMS) which has been built since 1995.   CMS is a consolidated clinical system which is built for clinicians, by clinicians for the care of HA patients.   It is an operational system supporting a wide variety of clinical workflow for all healthcare professionals in 42 public hospitals. Almost all documentations are recorded in English which may not be easily understood by Chinese who represents over 95% of Hong Kong population. However, local practices which could be manual or using different CMS modules are being adopted in different departments of the same hospital.

HA Go potentially serves over 9.7 million patients plus their carers.   They come from different social, educational, and financial backgrounds; and their experience in using smartphone or computer differs.   This invites great challenges to the design of

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the app so that it is easy to use for patients and their carers.   Security is of paramount important to protect patient confidentiality, data integrity and availability in particular in this vulnerable internet environment to ensure a secured sharing of data to and from the patient's / carer's smartphone with the HA CMS, and also their own monitoring devices.

HA Go

A membership system is adopted to protect patient privacy.   HA patients and their carers need to register and be verified before they can access patient information via HA Go.

Services such as single sign-on, security, patient and carer roles and rights, usability standards, and other inter-app communication protocols are built-in to ensure privacy protection while providing a unified and convenient experience to the patient. CMS supports healthcare professionals to prescribe apps to patients and data interoperability between HA Go and CMS allows continuation of care in the community.

Initial core features will include modules such as appointment, medication, rehab and payment when HA Go is launched in 2019.   An iterative approach will be used to continuously develop the HA Go Framework as different modules are built.

HA Go will be the change agent to modernize healthcare service delivery so that patients can take a more active role in their own care and to complete various service loops.

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