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Prudential recommends more public-private co-operation to maximise digital healthcare in Asia

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Launches new research that underscores critical role of technology in improving healthcare in Asia



Prudential Corporation Asia (Prudential), headquartered in Hong kong, has released The Pulse of Asia -- The Health of Asia Barometer, a report written by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), which underscores the unprecedented opportunity offered by digital health technologies to improve access to healthcare in Asia.

The research, which explores attitudes to healthcare in Asia, highlights the demand for tools and services to help people in the region better navigate the healthcare system. It also highlights the opportunity for governments to partner with the private sector to maximise the potential of digital healthcare.

High rates of digital health technology adoption

The report, which surveyed 5,000 adults across 13 markets in Asia, found that only around half of respondents (54%) believe that medical care is accessible and affordable. More concerningly, less than a quarter (22%) say they can easily access exercise and fitness facilities that would help improve their personal health and wellness in the coming year.

However, the Asia-wide research also underlines the potential of technology to directly combat these challenges. Over four fifths (81%) of respondents say technology has already improved their access to health services and nearly two thirds (60%) believe it has improved the affordability.

And this consumer appetite towards the digitisation of health shows no sign of abating - three years from now 71% of those surveyed said they will rely on technology even more heavily to improve their personal health and wellbeing.

Public-private action to improve healthcare

To fulfil the potential of digital healthcare, the report recommends greater public-private collaboration, suggesting that governments partner with private companies to deliver digitally-innovative ways to promote and manage health and wellness among citizens.

The report also highlights the opportunity for governments to improve public health information through digital channels. According to the research, social media is the most frequently cited source of personal health and wellness information. However, the survey respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the most trustworthy sources are national government and public health authorities. Governments can seize the opportunity by becoming the most reliable source of quality health information for citizens.

The report also recommends that governments look to promote connected health devices, but that these need to be underpinned by strict data governance. Data security will enable health data to be safely centralised, empowering governments to design better policies and build more targeted healthcare infrastructure.