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International Perspectives
Volume 17, 2012 - Issue sup1

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The Economics of eHealth and mHealth

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Pages 73-81 | Published online: 01 May 2012

Cite this article https://doi.org/10.1080/10810730.2011.649158

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Abstract

While mHealth has the potential to overcome traditional obstacles to the delivery of health services to the poor in lower and middle-income countries—issues related to access, quality, time, and resources—there is little evidence as to whether the expected benefits and savings can be actualized on a large scale. As a first step to developing the investment case for mHealth, this article outlines some of the key economic and financial questions that need to be answered in developing in-country eHealth investments. The proposed questions focus on the costs of eHealth infrastructure; regulatory structures that provide incentives at different levels of the health delivery system to encourage investment in, and use of, eHealth; and measuring the outcomes of successful eHealth utilization, including anticipated return on investment.

Acknowledgments

The authors acknowledge the support from the mHealth Alliance, which funded the preparation of this article. They also acknowledge the many helpful suggestions and comments on earlier drafts of the article, and in particular the advice from participants at the expert meeting organized by the mHealth Alliance and World Health Organization in Geneva on September 6 and 7, 2010.

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