

CCDC-Bridge Centre's Assisted Telemedicine Initiative Demonstrates Significant Improvements in Chronic Disease Outcomes

Category: Business

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The Centre for Chronic Disease Control (CCDC) has reported promising results from its innovative '[DigiSetu](#)' assisted telemedicine initiative, designed to improve healthcare access and outcomes for chronic disease patients in resource-limited settings. A study conducted across three telemedicine clinics in Tamil Nadu has demonstrated how combining telemedicine with trained health professionals can effectively address healthcare gaps, particularly for conditions like diabetes and hypertension. Key findings, published in the BMC Primary Care Journal, show that the initiative provided care to over 11,000 patients, significantly enhancing the diagnosis and management of chronic diseases.

The study emphasizes that assisted telemedicine can address barriers at patient, technology, and system levels, improving health outcomes in patients with chronic conditions and achieving digital health equity. Diabetes patients saw an average reduction of 33 mg/dL in fasting blood sugar levels. Hypertensive patients experienced 9.6 mmHg and 5.5 mmHg reductions in systolic and diastolic blood pressure, respectively, within nine months of their first visit. Read the research findings [here](#).

Dr. Arun P Jose, Deputy Director, Centre for Chronic Disease Control (CCDC) and Head, BRIDGE Centre for Digital Health at

CCDC, and one of the study authors said, *“In India, over 65% of the population live in rural areas, with limited access to quality healthcare. The ‘DigiSetu’ model showcases the transformative potential of assisted telemedicine by not only enhancing access to healthcare but also delivering tangible improvements in patient outcomes. Our results demonstrate that technology, combined with trained professionals, can bridge healthcare disparities and pave the way for digital health equity. We are excited to scale this sustainable model, ensuring better healthcare for millions across India and beyond.”*

The study leveraged interoperable health platforms, including electronic health records, point-of-care diagnostics, and clinical decision support systems. Nurses were trained to facilitate tele-consultations, ensuring seamless interactions between patients and physicians. Over 2.4 years (March 2021 – June 2023), the clinics recorded remarkable milestones with 11,388 patients accessing care, of which 59.3% were female. There were 26,998 consultations and 15,437 lab investigations conducted. Nearly 43% of patients with diabetes and 75.3% with hypertension were newly diagnosed, underscoring the importance of early detection and intervention.

Prof. (Dr) Dorairaj Prabhakaran, Executive Director, CCDC, added, *“To truly transform healthcare and improve lives, we need to embrace technology-driven models like DigiSetu. By integrating simple, effective digital health solutions into the ecosystem, we can break down the barriers that prevent millions in low-resource settings from accessing quality care. The impact of DigiSetu highlights the need for large-scale adoption of similar technologies to make equitable healthcare a reality for all.”*

With its focus on early diagnosis, improved adherence to care protocols, and better health outcomes, the DigiSetu model serves as a scalable solution for improving healthcare delivery in underserved regions.

About CCDC

The Centre for Chronic Disease Control (CCDC) is leading efforts to transform public health and empower public health professionals to combat the growing challenge of chronic diseases across India and low- and middle-income countries (LMIC). Established in 2000 as a non-profit scientific organization, this Delhi-based organization has been working alongside the Government of India (GoI) to reduce the burden of chronic diseases in India.