

UPSC 2021 Preparation National Digital Health Mission

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the National Digital Health Mission on 15th August 2020. The mission aims to create an integrated healthcare system linking practitioners with the patients digitally by giving them access to real-time health records. This will promote prompt and structured healthcare across the country.

How will it be helpful from the UPSC Exam perspective?

1. Questions that can be asked in Prelims
 - National Digital Health Mission launched under which ministry?
 - Year of launch
 - Components of National Digital Health Mission
 - Aims of the mission
2. Questions that can be asked in Mains
 - Government's initiatives towards improving the country's healthcare infrastructure.
 - Critical analysis of the National Digital Health Mission
 - Essay on digitalizing healthcare

Aspirants preparing for [UPSC 2021](#) can get the relevant facts about the NDHM in this article.

Important Facts about the National Digital Health Mission

Launch Date	15th August 2020 – 74th Independence Day
Comes under which Ministry	It is implemented by the National Health Authority (NHA) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Objective	To create a national digital health ecosystem that supports universal health coverage
Official Website	https://ndhm.gov.in/

Learn about all important [government schemes](#) that are important for most of the competitive examinations including the IAS Exam.

Background of National Digital Health Mission

1. **National Health Policy 2017** envisions:
 - Highest level of health and wellbeing for all at all ages
 - Preventive and promotive health care orientation in all development policies
 - Universal healthcare access
2. MoH&FM set up a **committee under J.Satyanarayana** to develop an implementation framework for the National Health Stack

3. The Satyanarayana committee recommended drafting a **National Digital Health Blueprint** to lay down the building blocks and action plan for a digital health mission.
4. National Digital Mission Blueprint recommended the establishment of an entity called **National Digital Health Mission** to provide for a digital healthcare ecosystem for healthcare services across the country.

National Health Authority that is the apex authority to implement the National Digital Health Mission is also the implementing authority of [Ayushman Bharat](#).

Objectives of National Digital Health Mission

1. **Establishment of Digital Health Systems**
 - Core digital health data managed by these systems
 - To manage the Infrastructure requirements for seamless exchange of services.
2. **Creation of Registries**
 - It will have all credible data of clinical establishments, healthcare professionals, health workers, drugs and pharmacies
3. Enforcement of adoption of **open standards** by all national digital health stakeholders
4. **Establishment of Standardized personal health records**
 - It will take inspiration from international standards
 - Based on an individual's informed consent, the records can be easily shared between individuals and healthcare professionals and services providers.
5. **Enterprise-class health application systems**
 - The aim will be to achieve health-related [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).
6. Adoption of **cooperative federalism** while coordinating with states and union territories.
7. Promotion of **private players' participation** along with the public health authorities
8. Making **healthcare services portable** nationally.
9. Promotion of **Clinical Decision Support (CDS) Systems** by healthcare professionals.
10. **Digitally manage:**
 - Identifying people, doctors, and health facilities,
 - Facilitating electronic signatures
 - Ensuring non-repudiable contracts
 - Making paperless payments
 - Securely storing digital records, and
 - Contacting people

The National Digital Health Mission is set to be built alongside the existing public digital infrastructure like [PM Jan-Dhan Yojana](#).

Components of National Digital Health Mission

There are four components:

1. National Health Electronic Registries
2. A Federated Personal Health Records (PHR) Framework – It will fight twin challenges of:
 - Access to healthcare reports/data by the patients and the healthcare provider for treatment
 - Making the data available for medical research

3. A National Health Analytics Platform
4. Other Horizontal Components like:
 - Unique Digital Health ID,
 - Health Data Dictionaries
 - Supply Chain Management for Drugs,
 - Payment gateways

Salient Features of National Digital Health Mission

1. The institutional framework of the mission runs at different levels starting from the apex level, followed by the board of directors, CEO and operations.
2. It is an **IT-enabled healthcare infrastructure system**
3. **Health ID** – It will be a repository of all the health-related information. Every participating stakeholder including healthcare providers and Indian citizens will be part of this health ID system on a voluntary basis. A unique health ID will be created by every citizen interested to access the benefits of this mission.
4. **Health data consent managers** will be linked with unique health IDs of the patients; who will aid the seamless exchange of the health records between the patient and the doctors.
5. The healthcare services will be provided through a **mobile app or through an official website**.
6. **Digi Doctor** – He/she will be the one who will be responsible for providing healthcare services across the country. An interested healthcare professional can act as a digital doctor to provide prescriptions to patients sitting in a different location altogether. He/she will be assigned free digital signatures which can be used to prescribe medicines.

What are the expected outcomes of NDHM?

As per the MoH&FW; the effective and efficient implementation of the mission can bring the following outcomes:

1. Citizens can access their health records within 5 clicks.
2. Unlike going for diagnostic tests multiple times with each visit to doctors, through this mission a citizen will have to undergo a diagnostic test only once and can follow up treatments from different healthcare providers.
3. All healthcare services are provided at a single point.
4. Continuum of care is assured at primary, secondary and tertiary care.

Challenges to the National Digital Health Mission

1. Data misuse – It is a challenge to secure the health data of the citizens along with other personal information to avoid a breach of the right to privacy.
2. Leakages from health repositories – Technological advancement and high security to avoid any leakage of the data.
3. Profiteering
4. Foreign surveillance

Conclusion

The National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) encompasses:

- Health and Well-being for all
- Health and Well-being at all ages
- Universal Health Coverage
- Citizen-centric Services
- Quality of Care
- Accountability for Performance
- Efficiency and Effectiveness in the delivery of services
- Creation of a holistic and comprehensive health eco-system

Related Links:

<u>National Health Mission</u>	<u>National Rural Health Mission</u>
<u>National Urban Health Mission</u>	<u>National AYUSH Mission</u>
<u>Gist of Yojana May 2020 Issue: Universal Health</u>	<u>RSTV: Pandemic and Public Health Systems</u>
<u>National Health Assurance Mission (NHAM)</u>	<u>RSTV: Affordable Healthcare</u>