



Digital District Health Strategy Frequently Asked Questions

What is Digital Health?

The Ministry of Health defines Digital Health as: **“the use of digital technologies and accessible data, and the associated cultural change it induces, to help New Zealanders manage their health and wellbeing and transform the nature of healthcare delivery”**.

To break this down, Digital Health is the use of technology, such as computers, smartphones, tablets, and IOT devices, to record, store and retrieve your health information when it is needed to assist in the achievement of something important to you. Having access to data through these sorts of devices will enable us to change how we help you, and underpin change in how we organise ourselves.

Why do we need a District Digital Health Vision and Strategy?

Like any journey, it is easier to get there with a map. Like any family, if we share the map and the timetable then we will get to the same place, at the same time. Digital health services are key for achieving the district vision for health and wellness. For digital health services to play its role in achieving success, we need to ensure they are coordinated in the right manner. Digital Health should have clear guidelines in areas such as assessment, standards, jurisdiction, privacy, and implementation. An overarching and evolving Digital Health Strategy provides us with a framework to achieve this.

What will be different with this Vision and Strategy?

Our aim is for the Strategy to implement technological changes to support the transformation of health and wellness across the district. Changes that create significant benefits for patients and staff, such as reduced need for hospital admissions, fewer adverse drug events, reduced duplicated tests or consultations, greater coordination of care for people with chronic conditions, and more well-informed treatment decisions.

The Strategy will be a living document, which means we will be constantly updating it. It will look five years into the future, taking into account new technologies and opportunities that may emerge.

What will not be changing is the focus on supporting individuals to achieve wellness, across the whole district, supported by technology.

Will we have to prioritise Digital Health investments?

Yes we will have to prioritise as the wish list is longer than the budget at this stage. Achieving our dream requires some technological building blocks to be put in place first and these need some investment as well. The creation of a Digital Health Strategy will enable us to more easily identify what are the high and low priority investments for our district.

How do I get involved?

There are drop in centers planned for each locality so you can be part of developing the strategy. There will also be separate sessions for health providers that fit better with their busy schedules. For more information about the strategy or to inquire about how to get involved, please go the [MidCentral DHB website](#) or email digitalhealth@midcentraldhb.govt.nz

With Digital Health technologies growing exponentially how will we keep up?

This is the exciting challenge for everyone who engages with Digital Health. The growth of Digital Health technology is why the Digital Health Strategy has to be a living document. The strategy is something for all of us to own and help implement, but, most importantly, we all need to stay involved and connected.

Who will govern the Digital Health Vision and Strategy?

The Digital Health strategy is a key enabler of the MidCentral District strategy and will similarly enable the Central PHO's strategy. Both the PHO and the DHB have established organisational governance bodies to guide, implement and manage the strategy, and its delivery.

What is happening regionally and nationally in Digital Health?

The national Digital Health Strategy is planned to be released this year, although the drafts are now available for consultation. Our Digital Health strategy needs to bridge the gap between the DHB's strategy and the national Digital Strategy. The Regional Health Informatics Program is rolling out to hospitals to provide extensive upgrades to their health information, patient administration and radiology systems. These are some of the building blocks needed to implement the Digital Health Strategy.

Will we look at Digital Health innovation?

Absolutely. The aim is to embrace different perspectives across the health sector in how we deliver the DHB strategy so engaging with innovation will happen in balance with logistical and financial considerations.