
Singapore AI Strategy: Focus on Chronic Disease Prevention



Technology has played a big role in making Singapore's healthcare system one of the most efficient in the world. However, a fast-ageing population, as well as the growing burden of chronic diseases and rising cost of healthcare, can weigh heavily on even the most effective healthcare systems.

It came as no surprise therefore that the National Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy, announced by the government earlier this month, will have chronic disease management and prevention as amongst its key areas of focus.

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For example, a personalised risk score for chronic diseases will be developed as part of the AI strategy's goal of empowering patients to better manage their own diseases. This scoring system will also be useful in future implementation of a clinical decision support tool for primary care doctors.

Key timelines and targets under Singapore's AI strategy for healthcare are as follows:

- **2022** - Roll out of the Singapore Eye Lesion Analyser, Selen+, a system which analyses retinal photographs across the nation for diabetes screening.
- **2025** - A retina-based risk score for high glucose, high blood pressure and high cholesterol (3H) related cardiovascular diseases will be developed.
- **2030** - The government, in collaboration with industry players, is set to develop AI models for 3H patients.

Even before the announcement of the national AI strategy, there have been some notable undertakings launched for the development of AI-powered solutions in the country. For instance SingHealth, one of the country's largest public healthcare groups, has an ongoing collaboration with Ping An Smart Healthcare (PASH), a subsidiary of the Ping An Group (Ping An) in China. The collaborators are trialling the use of PASH clinical decision support systems (CDSS) named AskBob, which can provide doctors with personalised treatment recommendations for Type 2 diabetes patients at the point of care.

Meanwhile, the National University Health System (NUHS) is also working with PASH to trial AskBob with clinicians for smart literature search and medical research trend analysis.

In addition to Healthcare, other areas of focus of the national AI strategy are: Transport and Logistics (ie, intelligent freight planning); Smart Cities and Estates (seamless and efficient municipal services); Education (personalised education through adaptive learning and assessment); and Safety and Security (border clearance operations).

Source: Healthcare IT News

Published on : Tue, 19 Nov 2019

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