



Optimizing your Digital Health Strategy

A ROADMAP FOR INFORMATICS

About The HITEQ Center



The HITEQ Center is a HRSA-funded National Training and Technical Assistance Partner (NTTAPs) that supports health centers to become data-driven and equitable by providing training, technical assistance, and resources for effective use of data, health IT, and EHRs. This support aims to enhance the quality, security, and documentation of care while addressing barriers and maximizing value.

- A **national website** with health center-focused resources, toolkits, training, and a calendar of related events.
- **Learning collaboratives, trainings, and on-demand technical assistance** on key topic areas.

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HITEQ Topic Areas

Virtual and digitally enabled care

Access to comprehensive care using health IT and telehealth

Privacy and security

Advancing interoperability and standards based exchange

Electronic patient engagement and digital health

Readiness for value based care

Using health IT and telehealth to improve documentation integrity and health equity

Using health IT or telehealth to address emerging issues: behavioral health, HIV prevention, and emergency preparedness

INTRODUCTION TO **DIGITAL HEALTH STRATEGY** IN HEALTH CENTERS

A digital health strategy represents a comprehensive plan that integrates technology into various aspects of healthcare delivery in primary care settings.

It is a blueprint for clinics to enhance patient care, streamline operations, and embrace the digital transformation in healthcare. This strategy encompasses a range of digital tools and platforms, from electronic health records (EHRs) to telehealth, digital patient engagement, and beyond.



PURPOSE OF THE DIGITAL HEALTH STRATEGY

A digital health strategy allows the health center to assess informatics plans and adoption through a lens of what is critical to success.

It is a framework of six key requirements.



ANY DIGITAL HEALTH ADOPTION MUST MEET THESE SIX REQUIREMENTS...



Engaging Patients



Enabling Care Team



Improving Outcomes



Maximize Data Utility



Align with Care Ecosystem



Realize Value

**...PARTICULARLY IN
THE HEALTH
CENTER SETTING.**

Engaging Patients

A digital strategy must engage patients in their overall health and wellness. This includes providing an engaging experience and services to promote health, wellness, engagement, and 'brand loyalty'-- while also addressing inequities.

- Self-service options (scheduling, labs, seeing trends)
- Expand access in various situations through digital navigation and ease of access.
- Retain patient within the health center's ecosystem.
- Simplify intake processes, questionnaires, and other data collection.
- Data protection through technology design.

Enabling the Care Team

Digital tools must enable care teams to provide excellent care and effectively collaborate.

Doing so means connecting care team members with patients/ caregivers to enhance patient safety, quality, productivity, and working together more efficiently.

- Allow management across the care team (not one person's responsibility).
- Any needed training can be done through existing or available modalities.
- Improve documentation for all purposes (accessible and legible to others).
- Clearly track progress and provide needed information with clear action.
- Simplify data collection (forms or screenings) and review.
- Assist with collaborative work and management of staffing.

Improving Outcomes

To facilitate optimized and cost-effective care, digital tools must leverage data and analytics to create embedded insights and decision support, thereby improving business and clinical outcomes and therefore, health of patients.

Outcomes across care locations!

- Decrease variability/ increase standardization and reliability
- Elucidate what the desired outcome is for given conditions
- Close care gaps
- Maximize preventative care
- Increase ability to evaluate impact of clinical care or interventions on patient outcomes

Maximize Data Utility

Data must be freely available and useable within the health center in order to support resource optimization, care coordination *and beyond the health center's four walls.*

Data definitions and data requirements are integrated, standardized and documented, and data access is optimized both across the organization and with external partners.

- Prioritize interoperability (across sites, tools, etc.) using standards based exchange and data access
- Privacy and security
- Moving past structured data to codified data
- Receiving multiple data streams
- Managing multiple data streams

Align with the Care Ecosystem

Situational alignment with the infrastructure, resources, and supports available across the healthcare ecosystem in order to minimize duplication of effort and maximize.

This means working across organizations and care sites and making use of external resources.

- Working across purposes and organizations to achieve the triple (or quadruple!) aim.
- Reduce duplication across settings.
- Use available resources, including those that are external.
- Technology replaces some tasks, augmenting decision-making and complementing the clinical judgment, and it does this across care settings.

Realize Value

A digital strategy supports growth, diversification, and innovation, allowing you to harness the power of strategic partnerships, platforms, tools, and data to keep pace with rapidly changing business imperatives and realize value of expended resources.

- Move the health center towards the triple aim of improving population health, enhancing quality of care for individual patients, and reducing per capita costs.
- Good use of time, goodwill, money
- Meet multiple requirements and align across purposes
- Improve health center's overall performance on key clinical and financial metrics
- Support growth through scalability

WHY IS IT ESSENTIAL TO CONSIDER THESE SIX REQUIREMENTS?

COSTS ADD UP



With each tool or addition requiring a subscription (and often additional charges for connection or maintenance), we can't add a different tool for each need!

Budgets and management level of effort won't allow that.

Anything we are adding to our health IT ecosystem needs to align with current systems and capabilities.

A new tool won't make our current systems magically better.



BEST CHANCE OF SUCCESS

THE ROLE OF THE EHR IN DIGITAL HEALTH STRATEGY

Central to a digital health strategy, EHRs store needed patient data, facilitating easy access and efficient management of patient information, but also demand standardized, comprehensive data in order to maintain integrity and maximize the utility of the patient information.

HOWEVER

An EHR system isn't designed to meet the increasingly broad and complex enterprise-wide analytics demands in healthcare today. Virtually all health systems that have invested heavily in these EHRs already have hit limitations around accessing the data they need for a comprehensive understanding of their patient populations and running advanced analytics to meet population health management (PHM) and value-based payment (VBP) goals.

There Are Some Tensions in the Role of People, Process, and Technology In Digital Health Strategy

THE EHR IS A PRODUCT AND A TOOL



EHRs are focused on retaining YOU the clinic as their client.

Whereas you, as the health center, want to retain health center patients.

So, **your** incentives are different than those of your EHR (or anyone else).

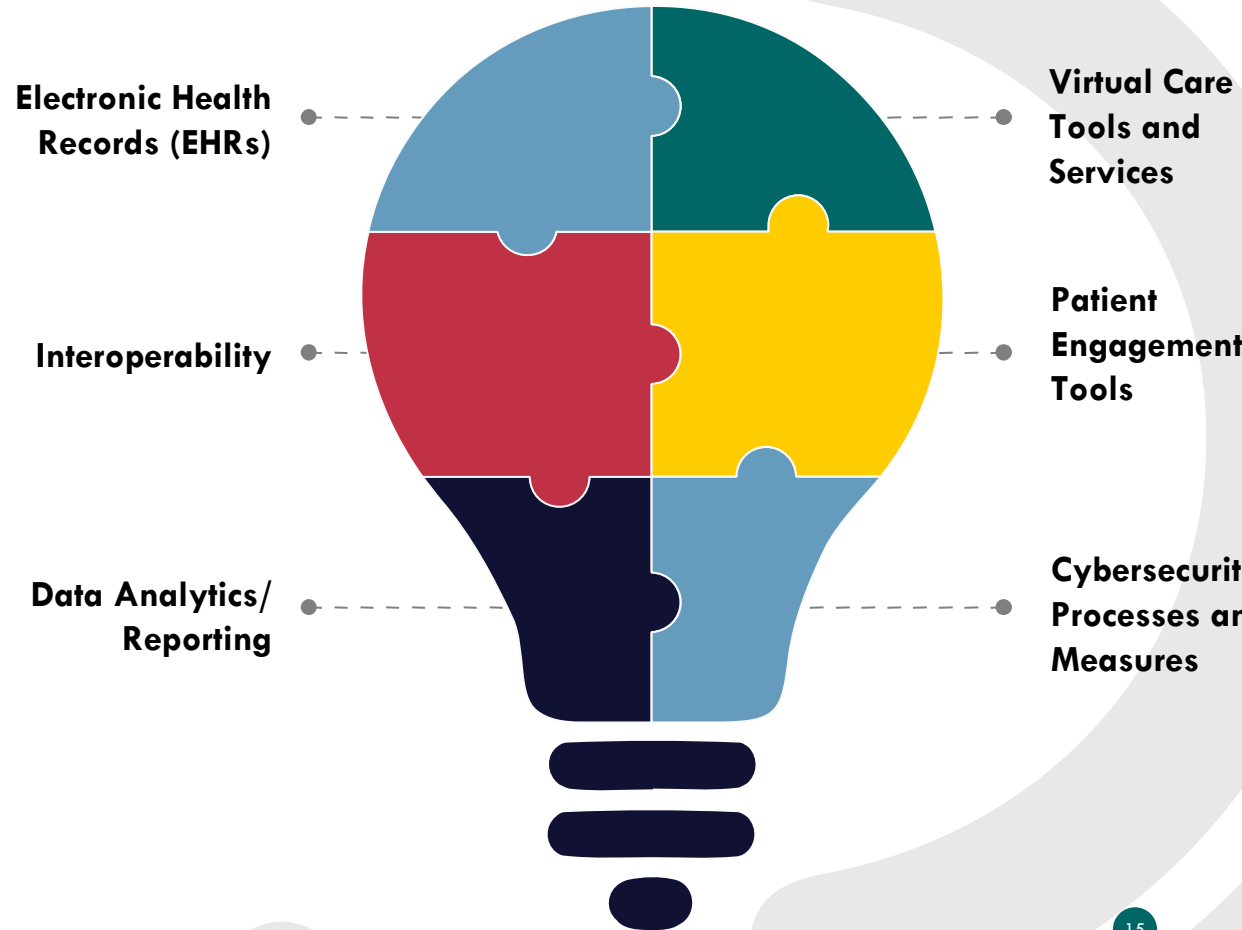
There are too many data streams to be reconciled and too many demands on that data (and the people and processes needed to enter it!) to be addressed by a single off-the-shelf product.



THERE IS FAR MORE TO DO THAN JUST AN EHR CAN DO

Components of a Digital Health Strategy

There is a lot to any health center's full digital health ecosystem these days!



Discussion Questions

- Where are there **gaps or challenges in your current digital health strategy** that you hope to address?
- In what ways has the increase in digital demands **changed the dynamic** within your health center?
- What do you see in the **digital future** at your center? What innovations are you excited about?



The Importance of Digital Health Strategy in Health Centers

In the evolving landscape of healthcare, the importance of a digital health strategy for primary care clinics cannot be overstated.



Future Readiness



Data-Driven Decision Making

A digital health strategy is the foundation of a data driven culture, which supports data driven decision making!

The ability to collect, analyze, AND USE data provides invaluable insights into patient trends and operational efficiency. This data-driven approach supports evidence-based decision making, enhancing the quality of care provided.



Adapting to Changing Expectations

Clinics that embrace digital health strategies meet these expectations, staying relevant and competitive:

Partner Expectations: Whether hospital, health system, or community partners, partners expect shared responsibility and data on an ongoing basis.

Patient Expectations: Today's healthcare consumers expect convenience, speed, and digital connectivity, mirroring their experiences in other service sectors.

Succeeding with Value Based Care

Improving Patient Care and Outcomes

A well established digital health strategy that informs tools and approaches allows health centers to offer more personalized and efficient care. EHRs hold fairly comprehensive patient data, so, when leveraged can aid in accurate outreach, prevention, and treatment. Virtual services extend care to remote or immobile patients, ensuring continuous care regardless of physical barriers.

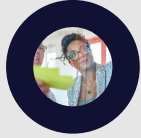
Enhancing Pt Engagement and Satisfaction

Empowered patients take a more active role in their health management. Patient portals, for instance, allow them access to their health information, test results, and educational resources. This transparency and ease of access improve patient engagement and satisfaction.

Streamlining Operations and Reducing Costs

A well-implemented digital health strategy can lead to more efficient clinic operations, reducing administrative burdens and operational costs. Improved data sharing and automation of tasks like appointment scheduling, prescription refills, and patient reminders saves time and resources.

How do you make progress?



Digital Strategy KPIs

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are high impact metrics that demonstrate how effectively an organization is achieving key business objectives. In a digital health strategy, KPIs are crucial for tracking progress, optimizing performance, and ensuring that health initiatives are delivering the intended outcomes for patient care and operational efficiency.



Hindrances to Digital Health Strategy

Integrations and access come with myriad considerations including managing relationships, permissions, and maintaining connections.

Each of these also requires navigating regulations, workflows, and relationships-- in addition to the technology!

Digital Strategy KPIs

Assess and Develop the Strategy

- Metrics related to **establishing needed infrastructure** and **support**.
- Roles and responsibilities.
- Policies, processes, and procedures.

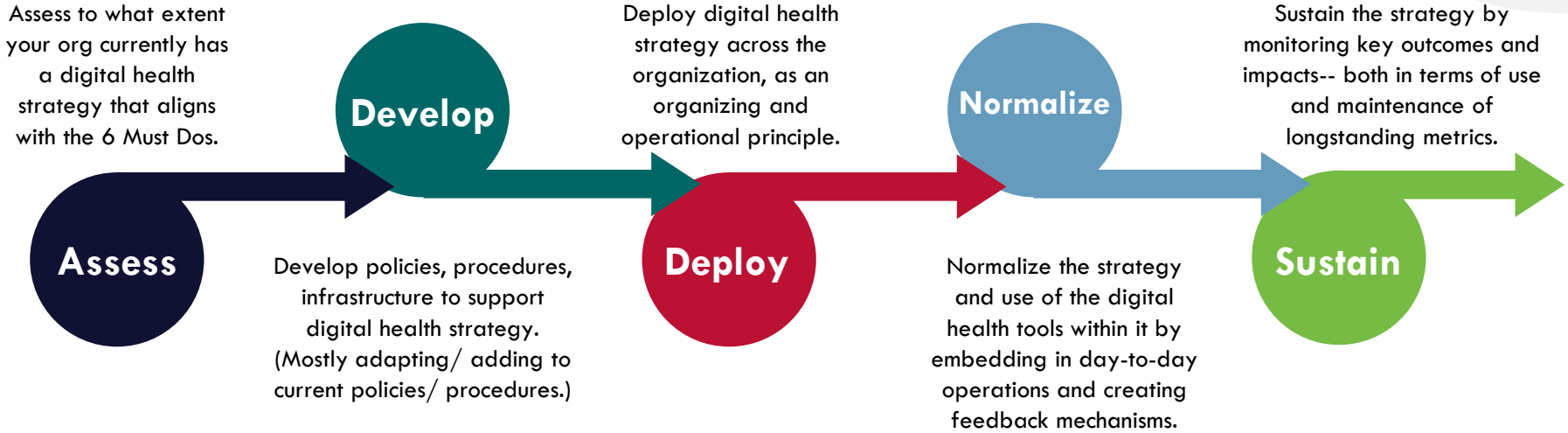
Deploy

Normalize and Sustain the Strategy

- Metrics related to **monitoring the ongoing implementation** and continuous improvement of digital health strategy.
- Adoption and ongoing use.
- Efficiency and effectiveness.

Tie KPIs to Phases of Change Management?

You can either plan this out as a process or figure out where you currently are and work on just that bit.



Hindrances to Digital Health Strategy

Mitigating Data Sharing-related Fears

- Many have only practiced in a world where HIPAA was the law of the land.
- New rules, expectations, and functionalities have added additional considerations.

Balancing Opportunity, Limitations, and Change Fatigue

- There are an ever increasing number of promising options that seem like The Solution to a real challenge.
- All options rely on the integrity of underlying systems and data as well as maintenance.

Mitigating Data Sharing-related Fears

People

Process

Technology

Sharing with Patients

- Communication with patient about data sharing
- Consent processes
- Communicating with leadership and providers about inevitable flare ups

- Training care teams on regs/ policies/ how to prevent sharing.
- Set up proxy policy and process.
- Assess data and system readiness for integration of patient facing tech.

- Review EHR configuration for alignment with regulations and strategic plans
- Update EHR settings to align with proxy policy
- Review EHR readiness for use for outreach.

Sharing with Others

- Establishing collaborations and relationships with referral partners and local systems that will support data sharing.
- Setting internal and external expectations.

- Established process for assessing data sharing requests
- Well defined processes for preventing sharing of information when allowed ([8 exceptions](#))

- Assessing and setting up interfaces.
- Applications for reconciling data that does not map into structured data.



HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY,
HITEQ
EVALUATION, AND QUALITY CENTER

Thank You!



HITEQinfo@jsi.com



HITEQcenter.org