Encouraging health workers to use mHealth for delivering primary healthcare services
Key policy considerations

The George Institute for Global Health

Better treatments
Better care
Healthier societies

Encourage the use of mobile devices for remote consultations & counselling

1 Health workers should be encouraged to use mobile devices to initiate remote consultation calls to their patients. To facilitate this, policies and protocols should be in place to explain what can and cannot be done in the remote consultations, and to clarify the liability issues of health workers using mobile devices/ telemedicine systems.

2 Health workers should use mobile devices to counsel and influence patients' health behaviours in a positive way through health promotion and educational messages.

Develop standard mHealth training package & guidelines for working hours

3 A standardised mHealth training package that covers the generic aspects of use of mobile devices and good data practices should be developed to appropriately train and mentor health workers on the correct use of mobile devices. The package should include the provision of learning and training content via mobile devices/mLearning to complement traditional methods of delivering continued health education and post-certification training.

4 Using mobile devices should lead to reduced travel time to remote/distant places and settings of health workers. Guidelines in collaboration with health workers should be developed to protect them from patients contacting them outside of normal working hours, such as in the context of emergencies or other considerations.
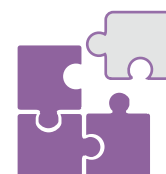
Technology that ensures patient information confidentiality & privacy

5 Health workers need to be aware of the importance of confidentiality of patient information when using mobile devices. mHealth applications for use by health workers to incorporate privacy and confidentiality preserving technologies by design.

6 Establish standard operating procedures that describe protocols for ensuring patient consent, data protection and storage, and verifying provider licensing and credentials.

Greater integration of mHealth interventions with existing electronic health information systems

7 Health workers need better integration of mHealth interventions with other existing electronic health information systems and to consolidate data dashboard between different vertical programmes.

This will improve the usability of their mobile devices and replace the need for physical reporting tools to avoid duplication of data recording and reporting systems.