

Q. National Digital Health Mission adds the dimension of inclusiveness and can be effectively transform India's healthcare system. Do you agree with this view? Explain. (200 words).

A. The 2017 National Health Policy envisions the attainment of highest possible health and wellbeing for all, through preventive and promotive healthcare. The National Digital Health Mission ^(NDHM) is a step in the right direction to achieve this goal.

The NDHM is a digital platform, that brings together policymakers, doctors, pharmacists, patients, NGOs etc. It achieves convergence of healthcare data, stakeholders and systems for the provision of efficient, accessible, inclusive, affordable, timely and safe healthcare.



This is how NDHM can achieve efficiency and inclusiveness in healthcare -

1. Convergence - Through convergence of data and stakeholders, the nation can → formulate data-driven, consultation-based macrohealth policies, → quickly identify critical gaps in infrastructure and quality of services, → as well as predict emerging challenges. eg. pandemic like COVID-19.

2. Efficiency -

→ Digi Doctor - Comprehensive repository of doctors -

helps to quickly match the patient with service provider.

→ Digital Health ID - Paperless health profile of citizens;

this will help prevent inconvenience of carrying papers, or redoing diagnostic tests. It can also help provide timely check up reminders to citizens.

3. Inclusiveness -

→ Specialized systems are in place to reach out to unconnected digitally illiterate, remote, hilly, tribal areas.

→ It will educate and empower individuals to access a wide range of health and welfare services - including for mental health, palliative care, etc. from a single platform.

With the principle of 'Think big, start small and scale fast', NDHM is a one of a kind digital measure, to achieve ^{Alma Ata Declaration} ^(SDG 3) 'Health for All'.