HEADlines

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*Every fortnight, **HEADlines** brings you the latest news, stories and commentaries in **education** and **healthcare**.*

Photo: The Journal of mHealth

Retail Healthcare on the Rise

With the growing popularity of retail healthcare, seeing a doctor might soon be just as convenient as getting your groceries. Prominent retailer chains in the U.S. have begun offering primary healthcare services, including virtual consultations, personal health devices, and mobile clinics. These are usually offered in collaboration with both private healthcare corporations and health-tech companies, offering a highly integrated healthcare system for patient care from the comfort of their homes.

Besides improving the accessibility of healthcare, particularly for rural communities, one of the key benefits of retail healthcare is in supporting outpatient services of existing public healthcare systems. For instance, maternal care could require far fewer doctor's visits, and mobile health devices would allow real-time data to be shared across health platforms. Not only would this improve patient care, it would also vastly increase the amount of data available for predictive analytics in health technologies, marking a big step forward in preventative healthcare.

Yet, the promise of retail healthcare also raises some significant concerns. Rather than improving the services offered by traditional healthcare providers, retail healthcare may wind up competing with them for the same limited resources, thereby exacerbating the strain to meet patient demands. Even patients have mixed reviews: a survey found that 73% of them received services in person at a clinic, compared to just 19% over telemedicine. As such, the tempting conveniences offered by retail healthcare may not actually align with the personal connection that patients expect in their healthcare.

While these concerns do not detract from the potential benefits of retail healthcare, they are certainly important considerations to bear in mind for retailers looking to venture into this. Offering healthcare services must first and foremost be a patient-driven endeavour instead of a profit-driven one, and perhaps only then will retail healthcare be a truly convenient option for us all.

In the Spotlight

Surgery-free brain stimulation could provide new treatment for dementia | Imperial College London

Scientists are developing a new non-invasive method of stimulating the brain which would provide an alternative treatment for brain diseases like Alzheimer's.

Hong Kong's TCM practitioners can play a bigger role in primary healthcare | South China Morning Post

A major Hong Kong think thank urges the government to involve TCM practitioners to increase the number of healthcare providers under a new subsidy scheme to treat chronic illnesses.

[Commentary] Climate change is our greatest health crisis. The same investments can often address both threats | Fortune

The metrics against which we measure climate change must include its severe impacts on health in order to highlight the pressing need for greater investments in this sector.

S'pore wants to become a Blue Zone 3.0 where gap between life and health spans is smaller | Straits Times

The Health Minister calls for long-term plans on inculcating behavioural changes in Singaporeans to make healthier lifestyles the new norm.

'Long colds' are a thing, like long Covid say experts | BBC News

A study found that recovering from a respiratory infection may be a long process, with patients experiencing symptoms up to a month after falling ill.

Patient-centric digital transformation: rethinking remote monitoring for comprehensive care | MedCity News

A recent webinar discussed the potential to expand digital health tools for remote monitoring for a wide range of applications in healthcare.

Dengue will 'take off' in southern Europe, US, Africa this decade, WHO scientist says | Channel News Asia

As temperatures continue get warmer, dengue outbreaks are expected to become a major threat in these regions.

Full SBB boosts diversity, allows personalised learning journeys: Principals, students in pilot | Straits Times

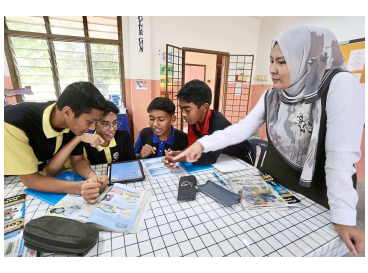
Parents, students and principals came together at a forum to discuss how the Subject-Based Banding pilot programme has impacted the quality of education being offered in schools.

Huawei, ASEAN Foundation, and SEAMEO host Seeds for the Future Summit 2023 | Bangkok Post

Tech companies and international organizations in the Asia Pacific region come together amidst efforts to boost digital talent among youth.

How to improve civic education through service learning | Times Higher Education

Nurturing civic-mindedness in students goes far beyond imparting knowledge, and service learning remains a key pedagogy for doing so.



Redefining STEM education | The Star

With the number of Malaysian students opting for STEM subjects alarmingly low, the Education Ministry looks to a new way of approaching STEM education by empowering local teachers.

That's all for the week!

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