



ET APP TIMES BACK TO BUSINESS

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

THE CURRENT PANDEMIC HAS ENABLED THE COMING OF AGE OF INDIAN E-HEALTH PLATFORMS WHOSE GROWTH WILL BE DRIVEN BY EVOLUTION, INNOVATION AND MODIFICATION

Rekha.Kavoor
@timesgroup.com

In the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic, the world has realised that the only way to avoid a frontal crash is to follow the new normal that requires distance and discipline. While the notion of seeing a doctor via your computer or cellphone is hardly new, telemedicine has emerged as a saviour in the present crises as patients are opting for technology to reduce social contact and avoid infection.

gimmick, are now embracing it wholeheartedly." According to health experts, more than 60 per cent of patients say the pandemic has increased their willingness to try telehealth.

THE NEW ORDER

The health sector is witnessing an overhaul of sorts as teleconsultations, online consultations and e-prescriptions are fast turning into the normal way of safely treating patients and containing the spread of the infection at hospitals, clinics and medical offices. Thanks

supportive government regulations and investments.

A TELE SURGE

Many online healthcare platforms now have the opportunity to gain substantial business and expand their foothold. App-based health platform MFine shared that the volume of users on its platform grew 5-6x since March 1 and during the period the company scaled up to 500 hospitals and 2500 doctors, across 30+ specialities, that now use the MFine platform for online delivery of care.

"Users can choose to consult with their preferred doctors via chat, audio or video to get prescriptions and/or routine care," informs Prasad Kompalli, MFine, CEO and Co-founder.

Like MFine, many other healthcare startups are seeing an unprecedented surge in demand in daily doctor consultations. Unlike the past, people are increasingly willing to pay for digital health services and queries regarding fever, cough, cold, sore throat and body ache have increased by 200 per cent.

Online e-health platform Medlife has enabled teleconsultation for a dozen different specialities and has seen good traction, with close to 2000 - 2500 consultations every week. "Apart from our app, we are also active on a collaboration between start-ups and the government, through a national helpline created specifically for COVID-19," informs Meera Iyer, CMO, Medlife.



DIGITAL HEALING

SHIELD OF SAFETY

Explaining the changing trend, technology expert Chaitanya Chinchlikar, says, "The conclusion is clear; COVID-19 has forced eHealth into the lives of many and going forward, as the lockdown eases, with patients still being wary of going to a clinic, and doctors wary of seeing patients, a lot of hospitals, doctors and patients that previously saw telemedicine/e-health as an unnecessary service, with some even calling it a

to technology citizens have access to the best medical services at a click of a mouse.

According to a report by research firm RedSeer Consulting, the Indian e-health sector is expected to become a \$16 billion opportunity by FY 2025, growing from \$1.2 billion, at a compound annual growth rate of 68 per cent touching 57 million households - driven by positive reception from both consumers and providers along with