

RESOLUTION 65 (Hyderabad, 2010)

Improving access to healthcare services by using information and communication technologies

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Hyderabad, 2010),

considering

a) that the World Telecommunication Development Conference (Doha, 2006) recommended that ITU continue to study the potential of using telecommunications for e-health in order to meet the needs of developing countries;

b) that the World Health Organization approved in May 2005 Resolution WHA58.28 on e-health, stressing "... that e-health is the cost-effective and secure use of information and communications technologies in support of health and health-related fields, including health-care services, health surveillance, health literature, and health education, knowledge and research";

c) that the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which was held in two phases in Geneva, 10-12 December 2003 and in Tunis, 16-18 November 2005, included e-health in the Geneva Plan of Action as one of the important ICT applications, and stated the following: "Promote collaborative efforts of governments, planners, health professionals, and other agencies along with the participation of international organizations for creating reliable, timely, high-quality and affordable healthcare and health information systems and for promoting continuous medical training, education, and research through the use of ICTs, while respecting and protecting citizens' right to privacy. Encourage the adoption of ICTs to improve and extend health care and health information systems to remote and underserved areas and vulnerable populations, recognizing women's roles as health providers in their families and communities",

considering further

a) the importance of maintaining momentum so that the potential advantages of information and communication technologies in the healthcare sector in developing countries are not compromised by barriers of a legal, technical, economic or any other nature;

b) revised Question 14/2 on what measures should be taken to facilitate the introduction of mobile e-health services in developing countries so that individuals, society and the economy all benefit from such initiatives,

recognizing

that e-health solutions and applications can play a very important role in healthcare delivery, in particular in developing countries, where the acute shortage of doctors, nurses and paramedics is directly proportional to the enormous unsatisfied demand for health services,

resolves to instruct the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to continue its efforts to raise awareness among decision-makers, regulators, telecommunication operators, health professionals, partners, beneficiaries and other key players of the benefit of telecommunications/ICTs for e-health applications;

2 to continue to support e-health projects in developing countries in collaboration with government, public, private, national, regional and international partners – in particular with the World Health Organization (WHO) – and to encourage collaboration on e-health projects at national and regional level;

3 to work with the health sector and other partners to identify and develop models for sustainability of e-health applications, particularly in remote and rural areas of developing countries, using the potential of mobile e-health either via mobile phones or via mobile medical centres wirelessly connected to nearby hospitals/clinics;

4 to assist developing countries in the development of their national e-health master plans;

5 to continue to promote, facilitate and provide technical support and training in information and communication technologies for e-health;

6 to continue to promote the development of telecommunication standards for e-health network solutions and interconnection with medical devices in the environment of developing countries, in conjunction with ITU-R and ITU-T in particular,

invites

1 Member States to consider the development of their national e-health strategy or "e-health master plan", with close cooperation between telecommunication and healthcare sectors, as a strategically important step forward to the introduction of e-health services;

2 international financial institutions and donor agencies to assist in developing e-health/telemedicine applications, projects and programmes in developing countries;

3 private-sector entities to develop different business models and consider the introduction of e-health/telemedicine services in developing countries on the basis of public-private partnerships.
