

Building the new digital world: launch of the European Heart Journal - Digital Health

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Welcome to the first edition of the *European Heart Journal - Digital Health*—an open-access peer-reviewed journal with a focus on all things digital that relate to the mission of the European Society of Cardiology—to reduce the burden of cardiovascular disease.

None of us has missed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, tearing through the fabric of society and changing the way we work and live. The pandemic has accelerated the transformation of health and healthcare across the world: what was beginning to happen at a slow pace has been transformed at warp speed into the new world of social distancing, lockdowns, and the use of technology to enable interaction, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention at distance. In many countries, remote consultation became the default, supported by rapid decision-making by policymakers on the need to properly reimburse this activity. What had been viewed by many as a minority activity became the accepted norm overnight. But in many other ways care has had to be delivered through new channels, and with constant re-examination of what we are trying to achieve and how we can do this in a safe, modern, and patient-centric manner.

The European Society of Cardiology recognizes the need for a new journal with global reach that focuses on digital health and healthcare. The journal will feature original scientific papers, reviews and opinion pieces, consensus documents, and educational material to support the healthcare workforce, adding visibility and credibility to digital transformation for the cardiovascular community. A strategic aim is to strengthen links with disciplines such as data science, biometric and signal processing and analysis, machine learning and artificial intelligence, and behavioural and organizational science—key to sustainable innovation in digital health and healthcare. Co-design and evaluation of innovation is needed, in partnership with consumers and policymakers.

The first edition showcases some of the key topics in digital health: remote monitoring and consultation, wearables and mobile health, machine learning supporting artificial intelligence, *in silico* modelling and the Digital Twin concept, the use of virtual or augmented reality to support complex interventions, and social media as a tool for professional education. Subsequent editions will also contain reviews and original work on Big Data, and biometric and signal analysis, but all

with a drive towards improving the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cardiovascular disease in all of its range and complexity. It is a sincere ambition of the Journal team to help facilitate discussion, and multi-stakeholder challenge, to all things digital. We hope that we will play our part in accelerating the move towards a truly consumer/patient-focused approach that uses the best of technology to support shared decision-making, and optimal outcomes and experience of care for those with, or at risk of, cardiovascular disease globally.

Education is a key activity of the European Society of Cardiology. At its Annual Scientific Meeting, there has been an increasing focus on digital innovation, showcasing new technologies and approaches, and highlighting the need for an evidence base to support the implementation of innovation. The Digital Health Committee, established in 2018, has helped drive the digital agenda through all of the activities of the ESC 'family' and has provided support for cardiovascular healthcare professionals across the world as they adapt to new ways of working and interacting with our patients and their families. The Journal will support this educational activity. It will also raise the visibility of digital innovation—where it has worked and where it needs improvement—challenging all stakeholders to provide the evidence to support implementation and innovation. The Journal will point to the future, but also provide support for those dealing with digital innovation in day-to-day practice.

The Editorial Board of the new journal demonstrates the multi-professional and international nature of digital technology and transformation. The world is a small place, made smaller by the digital revolution, and the European Society of Cardiology sees its role to be global and not confined to any continent.

Digital is now life as normal. Healthcare has been slow to transform, while the world changed around it, but COVID-19 has made the need for evolution (and revolution) all the more obvious.

As Chair of the ESC Digital Health Committee, I would urge you to support the new journal: read it, submit your best work, challenge the opinions of those working in this field, and let's build the new world together.

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The opinions expressed in this article are not necessarily those of the Editors of the *European Heart Journal - Digital Health* or of the European Society of Cardiology.

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