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How organisations are preventing healthcare burnout with sustainable digital transformation

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16 August 2021



Digital solutions like knowledge-sharing hubs and virtual assistants can be powerful tools for healthcare professionals—but only if they're designed, deployed, and supported in the right way. Recently, we've heard from healthcare organisations that have delivered successful, sustainable digital transformation by involving their healthcare professionals at every step.

For many healthcare providers, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital transformation, forcing them to rapidly find new ways to deliver their vital services. The result for healthcare practitioners—already working in a time of [widespread healthcare burnout](#)—was often another new challenge, and even greater stress.

Now, more and more providers are heeding [the WHO's timely call](#) to support their workforces' needs with improved conditions, and increased access to education and training.

Recently, we've spoken to healthcare organisations that are already leading the way on education and digital transformation, using technology to create communities of support and knowledge among their workforces. Read on to find some of the key takeaways from our conversations.

Digital learning across a diverse range of communities

Few healthcare providers have as wide a reach as Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), the humanitarian organisation dedicated to providing medical assistance to people affected by conflict, epidemics, disasters, or exclusion from healthcare.

With tens of thousands of healthcare professionals working in diverse locations and environments, sharing knowledge and support across MSF has always been a challenge. But now, the organisation has developed a new app, “Tembo”, that provides a digital space for learning and development on topics ranging from clinical skills to emergency responses.

At HIMSS Europe we were on a panel with Sarah Martin, Senior Program Manager for Tembo, who offered an insight how the organisation successfully deployed the app—and how it’s benefitting MSF professionals: “We were trying to offer all our staff access to digital learning, to create equality and inclusion for everyone in MSF. But when we delivered our first minimum viable product, we realised it was way too high-tech and it didn’t actually meet the needs of our people.”

Sarah and her team quickly adapted, re-focusing the app around its users. “We learned the connection between the professional using the app and its ease-of-use was really important—that helped us figure out what functionalities TEMBO needed.”

The secrets behind the success of Tembo

The reworked version of Tembo included easy access from multiple devices, offline functionality, a space for knowledge exchange, more than 300 digital courses, and access to additional learning resources. But it’s not just Tembo’s user-focused capabilities that make it a success—it’s the strategic way MSF’s team harnesses those capabilities and onboards new users to the app.

“We operate in complex and isolated locations, often with low connectivity, limited access to smartphones, and teams with low digital literacy. So, when we take Tembo on missions, we focus on the practical use of the technology—looking at what value we can add to the operations and populations we serve. We make sure to open a dialogue with teams on missions to allow for digital learning throughout the day,” explained Sarah.

Tembo might already be proving its worth, but Sarah and her team aren’t resting on their laurels— they’re constantly evolving their approach, to ensure the app is having the greatest possible impact on MSF’s operations: “We adapt our deployment strategy by country and context, and we’re always reinforcing digital skills by making the learning in Tembo as accessible as possible.”

A hospital focused on co-creation

Like MSF, our second guest healthcare provider has put practitioners at the heart of technological innovation. Lucíades Saude Hospital in Portugal completed an ambitious digital transformation between 2019 and 2020, aiming to improve operational efficiency and reduce costs.

The Hospital’s Chief Transformation Officer, Dr. Sofia Couto Da Rocha, joined us to discuss the strategy’s success. “Our main challenge was looking at how we could join technology and people to best serve healthcare professionals and patients,” explained Sofia. “We were focused on the relationships between technology and its users, and building digital literacy across our organisation.”

Throughout the hospital’s digital transformation, Sofia and her team engaged with healthcare professionals across the organisation to guide the project. “We adapted our strategy every day, always reaching out to our healthcare professionals to ask how we could help,” explained Sofia. “Their suggestions helped shape everything from small software changes to larger technology strategies. We focused on co-creation at every step.”

An innovative app designed for healthcare professionals and patients

One key step in Lucíades Saude Hospital’s digital transformation has been creation of a new app for healthcare professionals and patients, “Todos Por Um”, or “All for One”. As well as automating tasks for healthcare professionals, the app hosts an AI-powered chatbot that can capture patients’ symptoms and offer an accurate diagnosis—an ability that has proved invaluable in the age of COVID-19.

Todos Por Um is currently used by more than 4,000 doctors and registered nurses, and has already handled nearly 400,000 requests from patients. And it’s only becoming more useful. Since its launch, the

app has been expanded to automate even more tasks, and to be available on even more platforms.

Sofia sees the success of the app as a direct result of the close collaboration involved in its creation. "Innovation comes much easier when health professionals are focused on the same objective as the technology team," said Sofia. "What's more, we screened healthcare burnout across our organisation and gathered focus groups to guide our project. It helped us collect key insights on what capabilities the app needed."

The key components for a successful technology deployment

If there's one point that stood out from Sarah and Sofia during our conversations, it's that technology adoption should be focused on people, and healthcare providers should only implement it for the right reasons. It can't add any additional time pressures or stress.

What's more, technology needs to be simple, intuitive, and faster than your existing processes. It's important that your solution helps you automate steps within your workflow safely, to give your healthcare professionals more time to interact with patients and help them spend less time on unnecessary admin.

How Upper GI West creates efficient clinician workflows and speeds up transcription

Upper GI West in Western Australia offers a perfect example of technology being used effectively in a healthcare environment.

While Australian healthcare professionals dealt with the brunt of tighter resources during the pandemic, Upper GI West used [Dragon Medical One](#) to reduce costs and admin tasks, and create more efficient service delivery.

Before using Dragon Medical One, Krishna Epari, co-founder and Upper GI, Bariatric, Robotic and Endoscopicsurgeon, used a handheld dictaphone to capture all patient conversations that required him to upload audio files for medical transcription. "The letters would need to be reviewed, checked, corrected and signed off before they were sent out to patients," explained Krishna. "It was a very inefficient workflow, that was both time and resource-intensive—delays of several weeks were not uncommon."

But using Dragon Medical One, Krishna transformed his entire workflow. He no longer needs to rely on external transcription services, and he can capture patient stories instantly, wherever he's working. "I find Dragon Medical One to be more accurate than using medical typists. It doesn't require staff training, or familiarity with medical terminology," says Krishna.

After using Nuance's speech recognition technology for five years, Krishna upgraded the entire practice to Dragon Medical One a year ago, proving useful during the pandemic. Now, all doctors at Upper GI West have personalised Dragon profiles they can access from anywhere—speeding up patient letter delivery and reducing admin across the practice. The full conversation with Krishna from Upper GI West is available [here](#).

Tags: [Burnout](#), [Dragon Medical One](#), [COVID-19](#), [Customer success story](#)

More Information

Discover easier documentation

See the benefits of speech-enabling clinician documentation in our recent white paper, and see how it's making a difference for healthcare professionals across Australia.

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About Dr. Simon Wallace

Dr. Simon Wallace is the Chief Clinical Information Officer (CCIO) of Nuance's Healthcare division in the UK and Ireland. Simon has worked as a GP, hospital and public health doctor in Brighton and London. His interest in health informatics began in the 90s when he spent a year at the King's Fund investigating the impact of the internet on shared decision making between patients and their healthcare professional. For the past 15 years, he has worked for a range of organisations including Bupa, Dr Foster, Cerner Corporation and GSK across a range of technologies which include electronic patient records, telemedicine, mobile health and lifestyle devices. Simon has a keen interest in the voluntary sector, recently completing a 7 year term as a Trustee for Fitzrovia Youth in Action, a children and young people's charity based in London.

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