YOUNG EXPERTS
TECH FOR HEALTH

A Digital Health Primer

What is Digital Health?

- The term "digital health" can seem complex or intimidating to non-health or non-tech experts, **but it doesn't have to be!**

- In reality, digital health is a **broad, multidisciplinary field** that includes multiple concepts from an intersection between technology and healthcare (source)

- As **users** of both health services and technology (yes, your cell phone counts!), **we are all equipped to be digital health advocates** and provide input into what we want the future of healthcare to look like.

- Many other topic areas intersect with digital health, including public health, medicine, youth rights, education, public policy, economics, and technology

Human Rights in the Digital Age

- As of 2023, about 66% of the global population are smartphone users.

- Technology use is becoming less of a choice and more of a **necessity.**

- When we conduct so much of our lives online (working, socializing, banking, shopping, learning), there are implications for how we think about our individual human rights in a digital context.
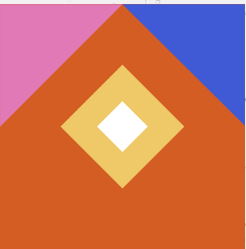
Consider this:
How might digital health impact human rights?

How can it **risk** human rights, and how can it **empower** people to realize their rights?

According to the OECD, our digital rights should include the rights to:

- **Freedom of opinion & expression**, including the right to seek, receive and impart information in the digital age
- **Privacy and protection** of personal data
- An emerging right to **access technology & the internet**

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While there is increasing attention to the issue of digital rights, young people are also beginning to speak up about what we feel should be included, like...

- Online **safety** from threats and hate speech
- Access to education and training that affords us with **digital literacy**
- Certainty that our **governments will take action** against private or foreign interests that threaten our rights (e.g. election interference, tracking & surveillance)

Spotlight on Health Data Governance

YET4H and our partner Transform Health have health data governance as a special area of focus, including participation in the <u>Health Data Governance Principles</u>.

These are global principles that aim to guide the governance of health data across public health systems and policies.
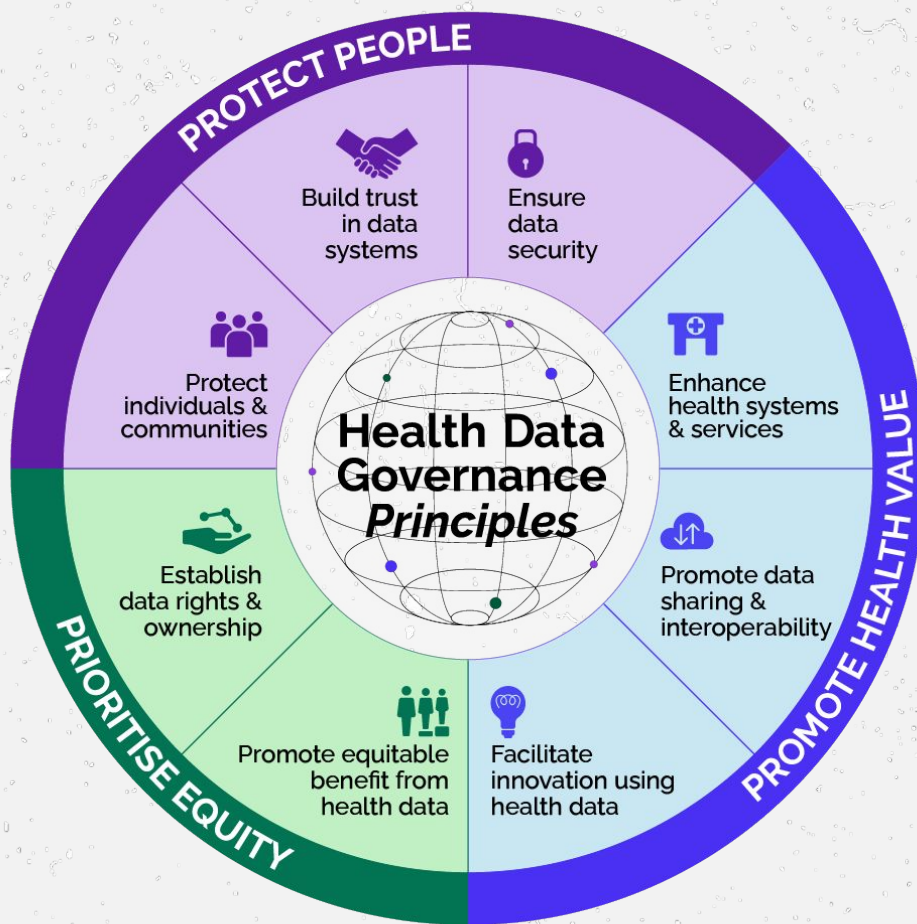
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We all have health data, and so we are all stakeholders when it comes to health data governance.

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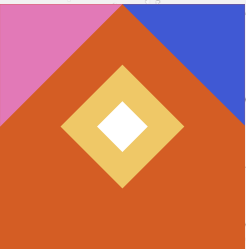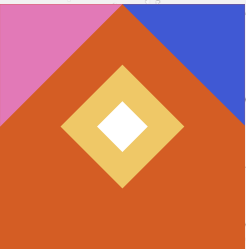# The Principles

YET4H's vision

…young people are **resourced** and **empowered** to **interrogate the status quo** in digital health, represent the **diversity** of youth, and shape more **inclusive** and **equitable** paradigms.

Why do we need community-centred, equitable approaches in digital health?

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- As our world becomes more and more digitized, **civic engagement requires engaging with technology and tech policy**.

- Technology can become very specialized very quickly, making it hard for the public to understand. However, as **end users**, feedback from members of the public is critical to ensure good design.

- When it comes to health, populations with the least power and privilege have been systematically excluded and tend to suffer worse access and health outcomes. **An equity focus in digital health helps to ensure no one gets left behind.**

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Why do we need community-centred, equitable approaches in digital health?

CONSIDERATIONS FOR EQUITABLE DIGITAL HEALTH SERVICES

DIGITAL EQUITY

ACCESSIBILITY
What is necessary to ensure that everyone has equitable access to the platforms and devices needed to participate in digital health programs and support?

SAFETY
What strategies can be used to build community trust and ensure privacy and safe spaces for use of digital health services?

AFFORDABILITY
What government sectors and community organizations could be partners to develop policies to ensure sustainable economic resources for digital inclusion for all?

LITERACY
How can digital literacy education and training to be tailored to socioeconomic circumstances among people using digital health services?

RELEVANCE
How can community members co-design and co-create digital mental health policies that reflect lived experience of inequities?

Source: https://nccdh.ca/resources/entry/digital-equity-in-health-services

Need for young people's participation?

- Those under 30 years of age comprise approximately **half of the world's population** (UN).

- Young people are often **underrepresented and overlooked**, when it comes to designing and making key decisions within the digital health space.

- A non-inclusive health digitalization **does not recognize unique** needs for these diverse populations and will expand inequities.

- As young people, **we want you to feel empowered to get involved in digital health decisions** in your home country and use your voice to bring other underrepresented groups into the conversation.

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Reach out via our socials:
@yet4uhc
info@yet4h.org
shannon@yet4h.org

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