

## **ROLE OF MHEALTH TECHNOLOGIES: NEW SKYLINES FOR MATERNAL HEALTHCARE IN INDIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The World Health Organization ranked India's health care system at 112 out of 190 countries in the World Health Report, 2000. While the opportunity to enter the market is much ripened; India still spends only around 4.2% of its national GDP as against 18% of the US towards health care goods and services. Further, there is a wide gap between rural and urban people in the health care system of India. This is the most worsening scenario. An astounding 70% of the population, yet lives in rural areas which has no or limited access to hospitals and clinics. As a result, the rural population mostly depends on alternative medicine and government programs in rural health dispensaries. MHealth - the use of mobile and wireless technologies, is the latent possibility to transmute the façade of health service delivery, around the globe in support of achieving the health objectives. The speedy advances in mobile applications and technologies, an upsurge in new opportunities for e-health services, the unrelenting growth of mobile cellular networks are the key elements in driving this change. Developed markets have 100% mobile spread and in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America it is expected to rise to a range of 82% to 119% in 2014. The smart phone adoption as well as the 3G and 4G networks provide a major boost for the use of a mobile platform for extending health care services. In this context, this paper brings the relevant concepts together to describe the opportunities and challenges in optimally using mobile telephony for maternal healthcare in rural India.

**KEYWORDS:** Healthcare, Mobile Phones, mHealth, ICT Media, Health Service Delivery