Health and the City

Editorial

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The COVID-19 pandemic has made it abundantly clear that healthcare systems worldwide need significant transformation and change. There is an urgent need for new models of care to improve patient outcomes and be better prepared for future health crises similar to the recent pandemic.

With the increasing prevalence of chronic disease and a consistent increase in urban population worldwide, the goal of healthcare systems should be to build healthy cities that have the ability to create physical and social environments that are designed to improve public health. It is time to use technology to build smart cities and provide care beyond the hospital walls through tech-driven solutions supported by enhanced community care.

In this issue, our contributors explore how healthcare systems operate in the wider urban context and analyse the challenges and opportunities of interconnected systems. They discuss the concept of healthy cities and how the process will require collaboration, integration and participation from government agencies, policymakers, healthcare organisations, investors, public and private health sector and patients.

Seet Cher Lui Stephanie and co-authors talk about Clinic Without Walls, a strategic innovation programme that aims to redesign care, digitalise processes and transform the healthcare workforce to deliver person-focused care beyond clinics into the community. Nimish Biloria and co-authors explore the intricate connection between our built environment and a techno centric approach to distinguish health and wellbeing from a multidisciplinary perspective while Henrique Martins discusses home-based, patient-centred healthcare and the role of emerging connected technologies such as smartphones and wearables and Ambient Assisted Living technologies and solutions.

Simona Agger Ganassi discusses the importance of integrated care and the need for cooperative creation of healthy cities and urban environments based on social equity, inclusion and health support for all. Ana Rita Londral and co-authors talk about CardioFollow.AI, a real-world pilot programme to improve patient safety and remote surveillance of cardiothoracic surgery patients.

Massimiliano Claps, Nino Giguashvili and Louisa Barker highlight how cities and their ecosystem partners can enhance their resilience by leveraging data and digital technologies to predict, prevent and respond to health risks, while Chris McCahan offers insights on how private healthcare companies can succeed commercially in the long term when operating in a low-income setting.

Daniela Pedrini is in the Spotlight in this issue as she talks about healthcare's response to COVID-19, climate change, changes that healthcare systems need to make and how healthcare architecture will take shape in the years to come.

We hope you will enjoy this issue. As always, your feedback is welcome.

Happy Reading!