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NEXT HEALTH

a new way to navigate the healthcare ecosystem

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Summary

To date, the main focus of the healthcare system has been on illness, but now, the focus is increasingly shifting towards health. The technical progress that has been made—particularly in terms of the increasing amount of data that is now available—makes it possible to identify potential problems so quickly that they can be dealt with before they even become an illness.

Human and artificial intelligence working together have the potential to significantly increase quality in both medicine and productivity, thereby reducing costs. However, in order for this to happen, the various actors and stakeholders in the healthcare system need to work together more intensively and in a greater spirit of partnership. This is particularly true when it comes to joint use of data. The more cooperative the approach to data sharing, the greater the amount and quality of data available in the system, and the better the results.

These developments will also change the position of patients in the healthcare system and how they see their role. The more frequently they come into contact with the healthcare system while they are healthy, the more their behaviour will come to resemble that of consumers. Even the hierarchical distance between doctor and patient will shrink or perhaps even disappear completely, for the simple reason that both parties will be taking advice from smart assistants when making decisions. Therefore, instruments that have proven useful in consumer research will also begin to be used in the healthcare system—for instance the "customer journey" method. Over time, greater transparency will also provide a clearer picture of the price–performance ratio.

Decisions about which medication or surgery is the right one can have serious consequences. Therefore, the tools that service providers and patients use to help them navigate the healthcare landscape need to be better and more intelligent than those they use to choose the right detergent.

Despite increasing digitalisation and the recent advances in telemedicine, the healthcare system will continue to incorporate analogue, static elements. The coming decades will be characterised by the coexistence of analogue and digital solutions, but with a continuous shift in the digital direction.

At the moment, it is still very easy to remain stuck in the old healthcare system narrative. This is why the change must be measurable and tangible. New partnerships and models of cooperation must therefore place great emphasis on the communicability of the progress made. This is the only way the desired spillover effects can be achieved.

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