



The future of health

HEALTH IN 2040 will be a world apart from what we have now. Digital transformation—enabled by radically interoperable data, artificial intelligence (AI), and open, secure platforms—can allow the health care industry to address consumer well-being more proactively. Cultural changes are now encouraging consumers to take a broader, more complex view of their health that focuses on maintaining mental and physical well-being rather than seeking treatment only when sick or injured.

By 2040, streams of health data, together with data from a variety of other relevant sources, will likely merge to create a multifaceted and highly personalized picture of every consumer's well-being. Consumers today are already growing accustomed to wearable devices that track activity. As these data-gathering devices become exponentially more sophisticated, they can aid in identifying conditions, risks, and suboptimal behaviors so that they can be addressed early. Analyses conducted by a tech-enabled toilet, for example, might be able to spot biomarkers that could indicate a potential change in health status long before symptoms appear.

At the same time, consumers' attitudes toward their own health are likely to shift toward sustaining well-being rather than responding to illness. Demand for health services that offer ongoing advice and support will likely rise. Greater emphasis on well-being and prevention could result in fewer and less severe diseases, which could allow people to avoid many of the catastrophic conditions—and health care expenses—that exist today.

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For those who do become ill, sophisticated tests and tools could mean that most diagnoses (and care) can take place at home. Treatment can become highly personalized, drawing on a wealth of data and AI-based tools to create customized insights into a consumer's health.

Armed with highly detailed personal information about their health, consumers can own their health data and play a central role in making decisions about their health and well-being. Indeed, health care in 2040 will likely be organized around the consumer, rather than around the institutions that drive the current health care system. Accustomed to transformations that have occurred in other sectors, such as e-commerce and mobility, consumers will likely demand that health care follow the same path to become an integrated part of their lives.

Many health care industry incumbents—providers, health plans, and pharmaceutical, medical device, and biotechnology companies—may be understandably hesitant to drive change in a marketplace that they currently dominate. Given their strong foothold in the existing ecosystem and their ability to navigate the regulatory environment, these organizations may be well-positioned to lead from the front. However, a number of technology-focused companies are beginning to disrupt the existing market. Legacy stakeholders should consider whether to disrupt themselves or isolate and protect their offerings to retain some of their existing market share. Incumbent players that are able to reinvent themselves could help usher in the future of health, while some could succumb to competition coming from outside the traditional industry boundaries. ●

To learn more, read *Forces of change: The future of health* on www.deloitte.com/insights.