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## **EIT Health Summit: From Healthcare Digitisation to Retail-isation**



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Lucien Engelen, founder and CEO Transform.Health, gave his vision of healthcare over the next seven years in EIT Health Summit 2022's keynote address.

Engelen reminds the audience that a digital society already exists. Information is readily available online, along with online shopping, payment systems, and digital IDs. The COVID-19 pandemic has already forced an overnight transition to telehealth and online education. Patient expectations now are that digital interactions should happen first, before physical in-person ones.

He warns that "healthcare will implode" by 2030 due to labour shortages, burnout rates, doubling healthcare demand, and financial pressures. The COVID-19 pandemic brought a taste of that future. Rather than the patients revolving around healthcare, healthcare can revolve around patients enabled by progress in technology. He calls this a "Healthcare Copernican moment" referring to Copernicus's discovery that the Earth revolves around the Sun and not the Sun around the Earth.

Patients expect to find information and demand healthcare online without the waiting and logistic issues surrounding in-person care. Thus, much innovation now revolves around bringing healthcare providers to the patient rather than the other way around. The demand is there because receiving in-person healthcare involves solving burdensome logistical problems from the patient's perspective. Examples of remote monitoring devices and patient interaction with digital humans drive home that healthcare has already become a software industry.

1. Current models of healthcare delivery are unsustainable. The healthcare demand is increasing faster than the ability to meet this demand.
2. Healthcare consumers (patients) are awakening to expect more from healthcare services through their interactions outside of healthcare services.
3. Technology is now available to enable the innovations that consumers expect. One can look outside healthcare to find solutions.

To increase healthcare sustainability, Engelen suggests that it may be better to focus on improving overall health rather than focusing on treating medical conditions. He points out that medical interventions determine only 6% of personal health. Others, besides healthcare providers, are interested in improving general health (including employers and the retail industry) and thus will become major players in filling the gaps that traditional players cannot efficiently fill due to the rising pressures.

Factors supporting healthcare changes include delocalisation due to the patient expectation of convenience and technological solution availability that can provide it, and democratisation due to the huge amount of information available to patients. Digitalisation is bringing speed to healthcare delivery and will drive the change.

Engelen concludes that the last seven years laid the infrastructure for digital health offerings. The next seven years will lay the fundamentals for delivering 'health' rather than focusing on health interventions. The opportunities provided the growing gaps traditional healthcare providers may be filled by retail to deliver health using different methodologies than traditional healthcare providers. He recommends to the audience that they "become the platform" to deliver health before others move in.

Source: [EIT Health Summit 2022](#)

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