

Why healthcare cloud solutions are going to skyrocket

An industry-wide demand to use data to improve system efficiency, deliver value-based care and enable productive collaborations is driving investment in cloud solutions, despite the healthcare industry's slow adoption of technology.



Natasha Gulati, digital health research manager, Frost & Sullivan

There has been a clear shift in healthcare providers' attitude toward cloud solutions with key decision makers now convinced that cloud environments are more secure than on-premise infrastructure, especially in terms of data back-up and disaster recovery.

Frost & Sullivan's [Healthcare Cloud Computing Outlook, Global, 2016–2021](#), finds that the global market for healthcare cloud computing will be worth almost \$10bn by 2021, primarily driven by the need to store the exponentially increasing volume of healthcare data. The research analyses key growth opportunities, business models, challenges, drivers, and industry-specific solutions being introduced using cloud platforms. Market participants, buyer behaviour, and customer expectations are also assessed.

Real-world data

“One major industry game-changer will be real-world data. The volume of unstructured medical and health data that is generated outside of clinical settings is growing exponentially, while the need for such data sets is even more dire among providers, pharmaceuticals, medical technology vendors, governments, and university researchers,” said Natasha Gulati, Frost & Sullivan’s digital health research manager.

“Growing awareness of the benefits of open platforms and increasing industry focus on interoperability and collaborative solution design are creating a huge demand for vertically integrated cloud platforms that open the data to multiple stakeholders who are willing to share the risks and the rewards of shared data assets.”

Furthermore, hospitals, physician practices, and other facets of the continuum of care will rapidly adopt cloud-based platforms to improve data and application access, enhance interoperability, and manage, store, and archive a wide range of health data for the enterprise. Applications that leverage de-identified patient information - collated from and analysed at multiple points of care - are an important growth opportunity.

Investment in apps

“An increasing number of providers are opting to build versus buy when it comes to their organisational applications. In the past few years, there have been significant investments in internal apps that integrate with electronic health records (EHRs), with the United States taking the lead in this area,” says Gulati.

“Platform as a service (PaaS) offers greater control over custom apps developed by providers compared to software as a service (SaaS), while it reduces the costs as well as data location and ownership concerns associated with infrastructure as a service (IaaS). Increasing demand for mobile apps, from both clinical staff and patients further fuels the need for custom app development.”

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