

## Health communication platform launches in South Africa

FoUp, a mobile and web-based health communication platform that connects doctors and patients, has officially launched in South Africa. This innovative social platform allows each to collaborate and actively participate in improving care and patient satisfaction.

This online healthcare tool provides patients with a secure platform on which they can actively participate in their health management process through tracking their symptoms, how they feel and how they respond to medication.

"Managing complex diseases is a difficult undertaking for health professionals and patients alike," says Simon Spurr, co-founder and director of FoUp South Africa. "Clinicians' time for patients is often limited, which can leave them feeling isolated. Through improved patient monitoring and doctor feedback, this platform provides an overview of the entire health patient experience and has the ability to increase patient control over their diseases, levels of emotional well-being and accelerate patient healing."

The platform forms part of a web ecosystem, allowing patients to connect with existing forums, medical apps and software that will interface with a myriad of medical apps, peripheral devices and self-help tools entering the mobile health (mhealth) market, which is expected to grow 20% annually over the next 3-5 years.

Through patients' dashboards, doctors will have access to information, insights and trends collated from unstructured medical, social and quality of life data collected through patient entries, diaries, games and blogs.

"Patient feedback is extremely valuable and technology is the best medium to assist doctors in gathering this information to gain deeper insight and improve symptom monitoring, diagnosis, treatment and overall patient care," adds Spurr. "This new type of communication between doctors and patients will also optimise consultations through providing insight into new symptoms, side effects, mood disorders and quality of life issues."

The secure platform also allows patients to anonymously build networks, or 'circles of care', to find support and engage with patients with similar conditions.

"With more than 20 million South Africans living with a chronic disease, which account for 70% of all deaths, this technology has the potential to fundamentally alter the economics of patient care," he concludes.

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