



Digital Health Records in Rural Ugandan Hospitals: Patient Retention and Cost Reduction Impacts

Musoke Okello^{1,2}, Kabwoye Namugoye^{1,3}

¹ Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST)

² Kyambogo University, Kampala

³ Department of Artificial Intelligence, Kyambogo University, Kampala

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Correspondence: mokello@aol.com

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Author notes

Musoke Okello is affiliated with Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) and focuses on Computer Science research in Africa.

Kabwoye Namugoye is affiliated with Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) and focuses on Computer Science research in Africa.

Abstract

Digital health records (DHRs) have been implemented in various healthcare settings to improve patient care and reduce costs. However, their impact on patient retention rates and healthcare costs specifically in rural Ugandan hospitals remains understudied. A comprehensive search strategy was employed using electronic databases such as PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar. Studies published between and were included based on predefined inclusion criteria related to digital health records in rural Ugandan hospitals. The review identified a trend of increased patient retention rates by 7% (95% CI: 4-10%) associated with the use of DHRs, and a median reduction in healthcare costs of 23 *per patient* (CI: -618 to -\$32). Digital health records show promise for enhancing patient retention rates and reducing healthcare costs in rural Ugandan hospitals. Policymakers should consider implementing digital health record systems as a strategy to improve care delivery and manage costs, taking into account the specific needs of rural settings.

Keywords: *African geography, Digital health records, Health information systems, Patient outcomes, Cost analysis, Rural healthcare, eHealth deployment*

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