



Efficiency as a building block towards sustainable, resilient healthcare systems

All.Can recommendations for consideration in the Declaration of Rome

In order to be resilient, adaptive, and innovative, health systems must be efficient. Inefficiencies weaken health systems, services and processes: they lead to significant financial loss and missed opportunities and hamper freeing up of resources that could bring continuous improvement to healthcare systems.

Efficient healthcare delivers the best possible health outcomes using the human, financial, infrastructural and technological resources available, with a focus on what really matters to patients and society.

Appropriate use and allocation of limited resources should be focused on healthcare service delivery, priorities and processes which reflect what is important to patients. In particular, this includes measures to avoid overuse and wastage. Moreover, efficiency requires appropriate allocations between disease areas. Efficiency gains should be reinvested into efficient health systems and practices; they should not be an incentive for cost-containment and -cutting.

Multistakeholder collaboration is critical to mobilize the necessary resources. Public authorities, academia, civil society and the private sector have to find common ground to collaborate and allocate human, financial and technical resources towards shared objectives. Several examples exist today in the field of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) and of course in the COVID19 vaccination programs.

The following All.Can recommendations for improving efficiency are designed with cancer care in mind, but may also be guiding principles for achieving efficiencies across healthcare systems more broadly.

1. Listen to patients and their representatives

The patient perspective must be the main determinant when defining health outcomes that matter. Patients should be involved throughout the process of delivering effective healthcare systems, especially in relation to services and processes. To help underpin the focus on what patients consider important, patient-reported outcome measures (PROMs) and patient-reported experience measures (PREMs) are essential tools to evaluate and improve healthcare results. Holistic care throughout the cancer patient pathway should be delivered, and prevention should be promoted systematically.

2. Promote an evidence-based and data-driven learning system

Key outcomes and quality/performance indicators need to be defined through multi-stakeholder collaboration. The data generated from these should be continually evaluated in terms of health outcomes achieved in relation to resources spent.

3. Break down siloes

Efficiency should be viewed and fostered based on a cross-silo approach, i.e. across the entire health system (spanning prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and palliation). Regulatory, health technology assessment and reimbursement agencies should create collaborative frameworks for evaluating and incentivising innovation that is efficient according to such cross-silo approaches. At provider level, efficiencies can be created through multi-disciplinary care teams providing holistic and integrated care to patients.

4. Scale up good practices

Efficient and innovative practices should be championed while ineffective, duplicative, harmful and/or wasteful cancer interventions should be retired. Care standards should be globally aligned at the optimum level to increase the quality of care. Furthermore, efficiency learnings should be shared between all stakeholders.

5. Support healthcare professionals and providers to improve efficiency

Healthcare professionals and providers play a key role in addressing inefficiencies in healthcare. Their understanding and participation are key to assessing inefficiencies, sharing learnings and driving change. An efficient healthcare system also provides healthcare professionals and providers with opportunities to learn how to do better, thus freeing resources and increasing the sense of purpose and pride in their work.



6. Establish efficient public policies and appropriate incentives

Suitable legislative frameworks, policies and incentives that foster efficiency should be implemented. These should be regularly monitored and assessed and have clear, specific and pragmatic goals for improving cancer patients' outcomes. Best practice examples at international, regional and national levels should be shared to enable healthcare to attain the highest possible standard. An environment that supports multi-disciplinary, multi-stakeholder collaborations and cross-sector partnerships aligned towards value-based healthcare should be fostered.

7. Use technology

Diagnostics and digital tools that improve health outcomes should be identified, assessed and adopted. Investment should be made in digital innovations shown to be of value to support/complement the provision of care and to ensure coherent access and use of health data.

Efficiency goals are all the more relevant in times of COVID-19, when health systems have been put under extreme pressure.

With regards to cancer specifically, All.Can recommends the following solutions for driving efficient cancer care and cancer systems in the face of global health crises such as COVID-19:

- Shifting to digital and telehealth solutions
- Delivering online support to patients and their caregivers
- Adapting cancer research
- Using innovation from the cancer world to support research into COVID-19 and other emerging health crises

N.B. for details on the above recommended solutions see: <https://www.all-can.org/efficiency-hub/rapid-responses-to-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

Harnessing data for more efficient care

Efficient healthcare systems that deliver the best possible outcomes for patients are evidence-based learning systems that incorporate meaningful input from healthcare users, make continuous assessments of products and processes, and report the results of healthcare interventions transparently. Robust data collection is a key driver to ensure that inefficiencies are systematically identified and remedied and health outcomes are continuously improved for the benefit of patients and their families.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of data and digital solutions in knowledge sharing and ensuring continuation of healthcare services. Yet, significant barriers still hinder our ability to fully harness the power of data for improving patient care – not just in cancer, but across the entire healthcare system. These challenges need to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Pressures on healthcare resources will only increase in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, growing costs of technology, ageing populations and with cancer increasingly becoming a chronic condition. Within this context, ensuring optimal efficiency of care must be a core goal of any healthcare system – ensuring resources are being used to deliver the best outcomes possible for patients. This will protect the long-term sustainability of our healthcare systems for future generations to come.

All.Can recommendations on harnessing data for better (cancer) care:

- **Ongoing investment in data quality:** Countries, institutions and individuals should invest in upholding databases with the highest quality data, to optimise its eventual use in cancer care.
- **Promote equity in data collection:** Countries need to ensure data collection in cancer care is equitable and representative of all populations, so that all can benefit from health improvement efforts.
- **Create national and international data standards:** While there are promising efforts being made, overall, a more consistent scaled approach is needed to support database linking, through improved data standardisation and interoperability of key national health datasets.



- **Foster a positive culture of data-sharing:** Foster a positive culture of data sharing among healthcare professionals through incentives built into the care pathways, minimising burden of data collection and use, integrated data systems, and intuitive data displays with actionable insights.
- **Develop national data governance frameworks:** To optimise the use of data in cancer care, countries should invest in building strong data governance frameworks that enable secondary use of data, while respecting citizens' rights to privacy and control of their health data.

Innovations in the way we use and collect data, as well as our ability to draw insights from data using data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI), promise to transform each step of the care pathway – from improved screening, early and accurate diagnosis, to personalised care through to long-term patient monitoring.

All.Can calls on the Italian Presidency of the G20 and the European Commission to take account of the above recommendations in their efforts to strengthen health systems and support economic recovery. We remain available for further collaboration and input ahead of the Global Health Summit and drafting of the Declaration of Rome.

About All.Can

All.Can is a global, multi-stakeholder initiative to inform and generate political and public engagement on the need to improve the efficiency of cancer care by focusing on what really matters to patients and society. All.Can seeks to make sure resources are directed towards achieving better health outcomes while contributing to health systems' overall sustainability.

Established in 2016, the All.Can initiative brings together a diverse membership base including policymakers, academics, patient organisations, healthcare professionals and industry.

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