

The Health Informatics

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATION DIVISION

Improving information systems - facilitating better health

What is health informatics?

Health informatics encompasses the capturing, processing and modelling of health-related information. It is the integration of computer science, information science, networking and communication with the aim of improving health.

Researchers in the field of health informatics study the effectiveness of health information systems - to compare various systems and to improve existing systems. They also investigate how effectively health information is communicated to end users - whether the messages are understood, and have the desired effect.

Health informatics at the MRC

The MRC Health Informatics Research and Development Co-ordination Division within the IKMD undertakes a wide range of health informatics research and related activities.

The research done by the Division addresses the problems surrounding computerised and manual information systems for patient care and management. Our research also aims to develop technologies that can bring health services closer to people where they live, especially in rural environments.

Overall, the goal of health informatics research at the MRC is to support, inform and guide health information systems planning and decision-making, as well as health information systems policy in South Africa and in the rest of Africa.

Our work consists of the following:

- Conducting relevant studies to find IT solutions for health problems.
- Providing guidelines for implementation of health information systems.
- Giving feedback to managers and implementers of health information systems by engaging in formative evaluation studies.
- Providing knowledge and medical terms to increase understanding between patients and doctors.
- Presenting courses and other forms of training in health informatics for health workers, managers and information managers.

For any related queries, please contact:

Ms Lyn Hanmer

Tel: +27 (0) 21 938-0343

E-mail: lyn.hanmer@mrc.ac.za

<http://www.mrc.ac.za/hird>

