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Introduction

Why was Healthspace developed?
A need was seen for a means to improve the communication of healthcare professionals between each other and their patients, as a means to improve healthcare in South Africa. This idea was developed and grew into the electronic health record platform you now see, made possible by advances in telecommunications and electronic technology and their widespread adoption into everyday life.

Healthspace seamlessly links practitioners to each other and to their patients, providing an easy-to-use and practical system to keep patient notes organised and safe, legible and easily accessible, whilst assisting with appointment scheduling and other routine tasks.

It was developed by a team of medical doctors with broad experience in the varied South African public and private health sectors, enabled by the expertise of REDi Internet. It is hoped that Healthspace will be a valuable contributor to improving healthcare quality and efficiency by being accessible, reliable and easy-to-use.

General Considerations

What features are offered?
The principle behind Healthspace is the sharing of accurate information. Both healthcare professionals and patients are able to interact on the system. Healthcare professionals are also able to share patient files with the consent of the patient. The system is designed to allow a paperless record-keeping and record-sharing system.

The main features include: Consultation notes, Prescriptions, Sick notes and Letters, Storage of laboratory or other reports, Referral system and Calendar / To do list.

The system does not currently offer a billing service, although negotiations are underway for the integration of laboratory services.

What are the costs involved?
There is no cost to the healthcare professional or patient to use the current system. Additional optional features (to be developed) may ask a nominal fee in the future. Revenue from selected advertisements is used to support the costs of running the system.

How does it work?
Healthspace is a web-based service. You will need to register online and log in each time you use it. Data is stored on our dedicated server, which you access via the internet.

Is it secure?
Healthspace uses similar security features used by online banking services. All data is stored on a server behind a secure firewall in a state-of-the-art hosting facility in Johannesburg. Data exchange uses 2568 bit encryption, using a secure Extended Validation SSL certificate. Data is backed up on the server daily.
Have a look at the address bar of your browser. You should see a green bar and/or lock symbol when you are on the healthspace.co.za website. This indicates that you are at the correct site. Depending on your browser, it may look something like this:

Do I have any influence on the way Healthspace functions?
We are always interested in your comments and suggestions. From time to time, surveys will be posted and we encourage your involvement in order to improve the service. Two Masters Dissertations, utilising doctors’ and patients’ perceptions respectively, have already been used to shape the service as you currently see it. We will evaluate any suggestions and, if feasible, adjust the system to accommodate these.

What happens if I decide that I no longer want to use Healthspace?
Healthcare professionals are required by law to retain copies of patient files for a certain period of time. The healthcare professional will retain access to the file and your profile will be archived. You will no longer be able to access it. Should you require a copy of your file, please contact your healthcare professional.

Before I start, what do I need?

Do I need any special skills or knowledge?
As long as you are familiar with using internet services such as online banking or online shopping, you will be able to learn to navigate the Healthspace interface in very little time. You must also be able to read and respond to emails.

Do I have to have my own email address?
You must have a personal email address, which can be accessed only by yourself, in order to register and use Healthspace. Verification steps and interactive features rely on emails.

What do I need in terms of internet connectivity?
Healthspace needs a broadband internet connection. Any stable connection will suffice, whether by ADSL, Wi Fi or mobile 3G/HSDPA.

Do I need specific hardware or software?
No, Healthspace will work on any desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone*, as long as your chosen device has an internet connection. You do not need to install or download any software. Simply use your favourite internet browser. You need your own mobile phone number in order to register and follow verification steps.

Different browsers behave slightly differently and you may want to try the performance on each one. For example, Chrome may perform better than Safari on certain systems.
Getting Started on the Healthspace System

Setting up my Profile

How do I register?

From the Home Page, click on “Register” and then on “Register as a Patient”, or go directly to https://www.healthspace.co.za/register.html.

You will be asked to complete a registration form as completely as possible. Fields marked with an asterisk (*) are compulsory, but the more information you provide, the better. Select Parent/Guardian at the top of the form.

Your Username cannot be changed at a later stage, but your password can be changed.

If you are registering on your own private computer where you are registering, keep the “Remember Me” box ticked. This will make logging in simpler when you next want to log in.

Tick the acceptance of Terms & Conditions and click “Register”.

As the next step in the registration process, you will be given the opportunity to add a photo of yourself to your profile. Click “Choose File” to browse your computer for a file and then click “Upload Photo”. You can skip this step and upload a photo from your profile later if you wish - see: “How do I add a photo of myself to my profile?”.

How does the system verify my registration as authentic?

When registering, a verification email will be sent to your email address. You must respond to this email by clicking the link in the email, otherwise your registration will not be verified and you will not be able to log in.

How do I log in?

From the Home Page, go to Patient Login, or directly to https://www.healthspace.co.za/patients.html. In the Patient Login box, enter your Username and Password exactly as those given during your registration. Note that these are case sensitive.

If you have forgotten your login details, click on “Forgot Password” and enter your email address to receive a reminder email.

Once logged in, you will be taken to your Profile Page. This is your base of operations for all Healthspace functions.

Tip: It will save you time if you bookmark the Patient Login page instead of the Home page.
When should I log out?
You should log out manually when you are finished, to prevent unauthorised access.

You will stay logged in until you log out, however the system will log you out automatically at midnight.

How do I add a photo of myself to my profile?
You can use a personal photo to help your healthcare professional to remember you.

On the right of your profile page click on “Upload a new Photo”. Click “Choose a File”, and browse for a photo file on your device (file size must be less than 500Kb). Once the correct file is selected, click on “Upload Photo”.

How do I add my children to my profile?
Log out and repeat all of the steps described above in “How do I register?”. However, you should note the following:

- Instead of selecting “Parent/Guardian”, select “Child”
- Use Your Username and password
- Enter your child’s personal details

Add all your children by repeating the process, then log back into your profile to view and update their profiles.

Can I add a spouse to my profile?
No, adults over the age of 18 must have their own files.

Can I change the parent to whom my children is are linked?
Yes, email us at info@healthspace.co.za with the details of your request and we can make this change for you.

What happens when my child turns 18?
Your child may have his/her own personal adult profile. A child who has turned 18 must first sign a consent form and provide a personal email address and Username.

Your healthcare professional is able to upgrade your child’s profile to an adult profile on request. Alternatively, your child should email a request to us containing all the relevant details. He/she will then be required to log in and accept the terms and conditions.

How do I assign a Healthcare Professional to my profile?
On your profile page, type the surname of your HP in the Search for a HP box, and click “Submit”. Next to the relevant HP’s name is a small box, which you should tick. Then click “Assign Selected Healthcare Professionals”.

From your profile page, you can then click “View/Update my list of HPs”. HPs assigned and authorised to see your profile will be listed. To remove them, you can click on the blue X to the left of the name. They will still be able to access their notes, however.

See also “Visiting other Healthcare Professionals”.
Can a healthcare professional register me on my behalf?

Yes, a HP or Secretary can do this on your behalf. However, you are required to sign a consent form for them to do this for you. It is also recommended that you provide them with a preferred username as this cannot be changed later. The secretary will be able to print out a welcome form for you containing your login details. If you were given a generic password it is recommended that you log in and create your own personal password.

If you do not have an email address, you will be automatically verified but your access to certain features will be limited.

Updating your Personal Information

Personal details

Remember to check all your details carefully so that your healthcare professional can contact you with important information (e.g. results) if necessary.

To update your details, go to your profile page and click “Update my Personal Details” on the left. After changing the necessary information, tick the Terms and Conditions box and click “Update”.

Medical history

It is very important to keep an up-to-date record of your medical history. You may need it at any time, for example while travelling, and being able to reference it quickly and accurately is very valuable.

An accurate medical history is very valuable for making sound clinical decisions. The more information you provide, the more useful your history is likely to be. In particular, remember to add any allergies you may have.

From your profile page, go to “Update my medical history”. After entering your history, save it for future reference. It can also be accessed via your patient file, by clicking “Show Medical History”.


My Patient File

How do I open my Patient File?
On the left of your profile page, click “View my patient file”.

What can I see in my Patient File?

Personal details
On the left, you will see a list of your personal details, including age, contact details, any linked children and medical aid details.

Medical History
On the body of the page you will see a list of chronic conditions, regular medications and any allergies, as listed in your medical history. You can also directly access and update your detailed medical history by clicking the “Show Medical History” button.

Notes
Under latest notes, you will see the most recent notes or referral letters written by your healthcare professional (in green). You will also see (in orange) any diagnoses made during recent visits. For an entire list, go back to your profile page and click on “My HP’s Notes”.

Prescriptions
The details of previous prescriptions are also listed for your reference.

Documents / Lab Results
Finally, you will see a list of documents, such as laboratory results, that have been uploaded onto your file. To access these files, go back to your profile page and click on “My Lab Results”. You can then click on each file to view it.

Can information be deleted from my patient file?
For medico-legal reasons, details from your file cannot be deleted or altered. New notes can be made, indicating that previous notes are incorrect, if applicable.

You can update your medical history, but a copy of the current history will be archived each time it is updated.
Other Features

Visiting other Healthcare Professionals

I want to see another HP already registered on Healthspace. What do I need to do?

There are three options. The simplest is for you to log into your profile, do a search for a HP and add him/her to your list of authorised HPs. See “How do I assign a Healthcare Professional to my profile?”.

Alternatively, the new HP can search for you on the system and request access. You will receive an email and will need to respond to this email before access will be allowed.

Thirdly, your HP can refer you to another HP already on Healthspace. You will receive an email notification, to which you must respond in order to allow access. The new HP will then be added automatically to your list of authorised HPs.

What happens if I want a HP, not registered on Healthspace, to access my patient file?

You need to request that the HP registers on Healthspace. It is a simple process, but remember that because of the necessary verification steps, there may be a delay before the HP is able to access your file. In addition, once the HP is registered you will either have to add him/her to your authorised HPs list online, or you will have to approve his/her access request via email.

Questions about Confidentiality

Is a secretary able to see my medical details?

The amount of information viewable to a secretary is limited to features needed for administrative purposes.

The secretary has access to your personal information (contact details, medical aid details, etc.) and any diagnostic codes, referral notes, or short information notes. A secretary can also update your personal information.

Secretaries can also upload documents such as laboratory results to your profile.

A secretary cannot view any of the information within the medical history, such as regular medications, allergies, or previous scripts, or any detailed consultation notes.

What steps can I take to keep my information confidential?

Always ensure that you keep your username and personal password private. If you were provided with a generic password by your healthcare professional, change it to one that only you know.

Use an email address that only you are able to access.

Log out after accessing your profile.
Rating System for Feedback on Healthcare

What is the value of the rating system?
This system provides a way of providing useful feedback from on various aspects of one’s healthcare experience.

One can view ratings for Healthcare Professionals in your area or in a certain speciality.

What types of characteristics are scored?
Scores are given from 1 to 5 (lowest to highest) for each of the following:

- Clinical Competence
- Bedside Manner
- Facilities
- Cost
- Follow-up

How do I add a rating?
Do a HP search from your profile page. On the far right are stars next to the HP’s name. Click on the stars to open a new window that allows you to provide ratings. You can provide a rating once every 3 months.

Troubleshooting and Assistance

Verification email not received
Until you have completed the verification process by responding to the email sent during registration, you will not be able to log in.

The Healthspace server sends out emails but for various reasons, the email sometimes does not reach the recipient.

When this happens, check your spam folder and if the email is not there, please send us an email so we can verify you.

Contacting Us:
You are welcome to email us at info@healthspace.co.za or use the online enquiry form. We try to keep the turnaround time for replies as short as possible, usually to within a few hours. From time to time, replies may be delayed by a day or more if the office is particularly busy or closed for special occasions.

Please do not contact Healthspace for reasons other than technical queries regarding the Healthspace Website. In order to contact your healthcare professional please contact him/her directly.
Errors or Omissions

If you come across any errors or omissions in this help document, please notify us by email on info@healthspace.co.za.