

Improving digital health literacy for healthy aging

A comparative study of the UK and Japan

What is digital health literacy?



Digital health literacy as a super determinant of health: More than simply the sum of its parts

Robin van Kessel^{a,b,c,*}, Brian Li Han Wong^{c,d,e}, Timo Clemens^a, Helmut Brand^{a,f}

^a Department of International Health, Care and Public Health Research Institute (CAPHRD), Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences, Maastricht University, the Netherlands

^b Studio Europa, Maastricht University, the Netherlands

^c Research Committee, Global Health Workforce Network (GHWN) Youth Hub, World Health Organization, Switzerland

^d The Lancet and Financial Times Commission on Governing Health Futures 2030: Growing up in a digital world, Global Health Centre, The Graduate Institute, Geneva, Switzerland

^e Digital Health Section, European Public Health Association (EUPHA), Utrecht, the Netherlands

^f Prasanna School of Public Health, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal, Karnata-taka, India

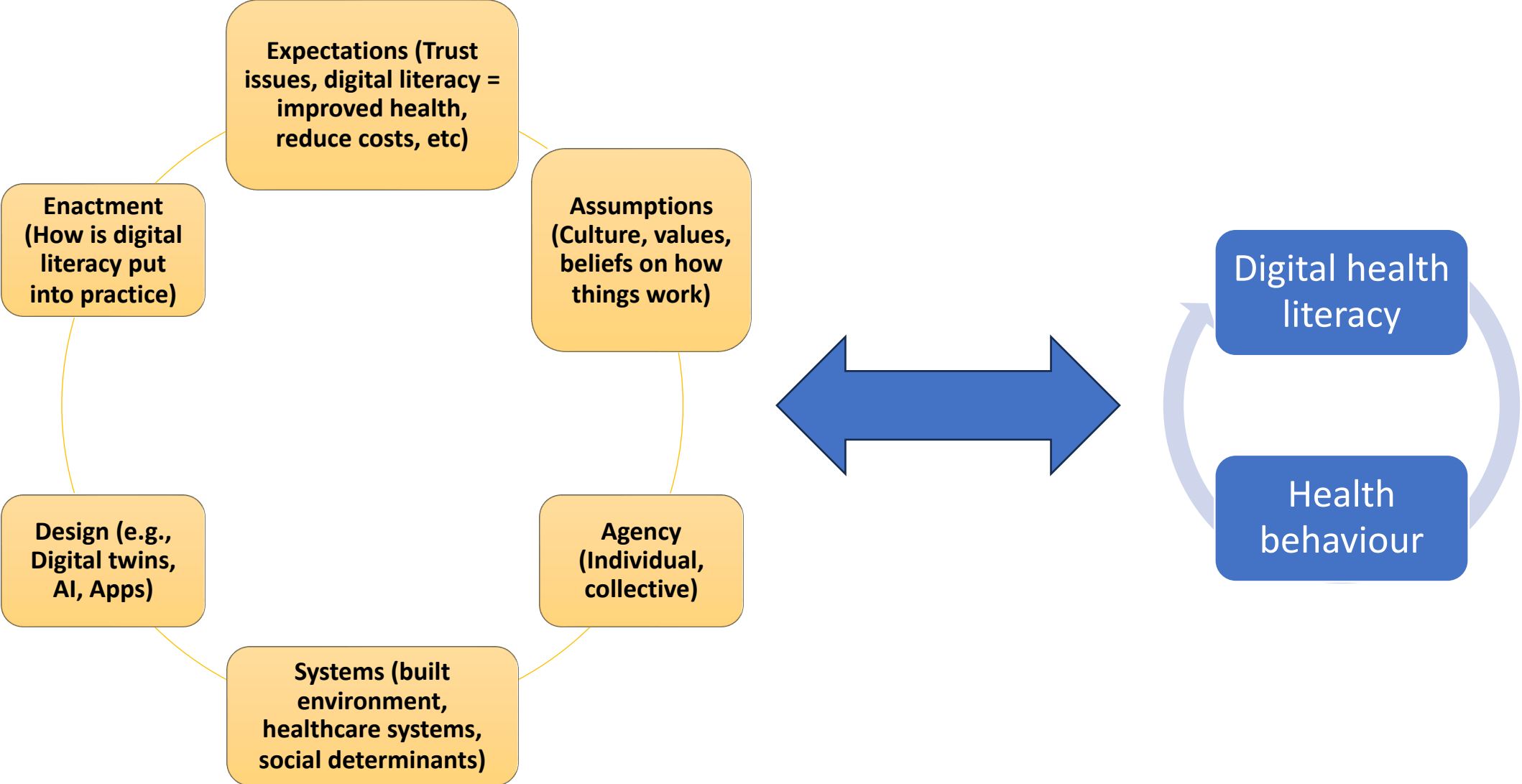
Digital media has permeated all strata of daily life to the point where people engage with them for several hours each day on average. While urban versus rural environments are all factors that can influence the development of both health and digital literacy (Scheerder et al., 2017:

Digital literacy is described as “the ability to use information and communication technologies to **find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills**” (American Library Association, 2017; UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization), 2011).

Health literacy – the ability to **obtain, read, understand, and use health-care information to make appropriate/informed health decisions** (Sørensen et al., 2012; Sørensen et al., 2015)

Digital health literacy and internet connectivity have recently been acknowledged as “super social determinants of health” in that they have implications for the wider social determinants of health (Sieck et al., 2021). However, **one must possess the requisite civic, digital, and health literacies in order to meaningfully participate in a digital era and achieve optimal health and well-being** (Honeyman et al., 2020)

Understanding digital health literacy and ageing in the UK and Japan



Impact and importance

- Engage in a **complex understanding** of health literacy in two different contexts/systems; Japan and the UK
- Identify factors that **limit or support** digital health literacy processes and their **potential impact on ageing**
- What can we learn from these different systems?
 - Are there commonalities?
 - What are key differences?
 - What can each learn from the other?
- Can we identify recommendations and advice to **guide health policy and practice?**