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| **Digital health communication and citizen empowerment: Connecting health interventions, technology, and communities**  |
| **Conference sub-theme addressed**Health equity**Relevant experience or practice**As a key means of addressing health issues among increasingly digitally connected populations, a growing number of health entities have turned to Mobile Health and Social Media Health (eHealth and mHealth) driven promotion and outreach efforts.To find out whether digital technology really deepens theoretical understanding of essential elements in narrative communication and entertainment education, we systematically examined narrative aspects of emerging technological innovations (e.g., wearable (digital) health devices, mobile platforms).We found problems native to general digital communication where the novelty of technology drives the narrative rather than the other way around. We concluded that the application of social representation/influence and/or narrative models for digital health communication would render the technology more humane and dialogical and work against isolation, antagonism and stress, typical for insular tech users, which in turn requires a broader collaboration of multiple disciplines and sectors.**Implications for health promotion**In the domain of health behaviour change, interventions have failed to consider the extent to which different receivers are motivated and able to engage in the required actions, and to what extent the interventions are entertaining and engaging in and of themselves, resulting in suboptimal health interventions. Increased collaboration of technology with communication and health experts, e.g., patient empowerment platforms and health wearable, is a pivotal step to increase effective implementation of health technologies.**Implications for sustainable development**This discussion is part of the larger discussions of creating healthy cities and intersectoral endeavours toward supportive environments. That is, in order to deliver innovative, coordinated ideas to move a population toward healthier lifestyles, it is incumbent to first understand how specific tools, meanings and language use in health promotion influence the communication practices by groups involved in it and what particular points of agreement and disagreement prevent more collaborative action. Exploring the embeddedness of narratives in health cannot only help explain how communication receivers incorporate them into their ways of understanding and everyday talk, but opens up larger avenues for participatory dialogue regarding sustainable development. |