Timeline

mHealth: Ethics, law and society

MHEALTH AS A NATIONAL AND GLOBAL PHENOMENON: MOVING IN AND OUT OF GERMAN CONTEXT

Universität Augsburg University

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Evolution of mHealth

2007 First time Quantifed Self movement is mentioned [1]

Late 2000s mHealth for chronic care [2]

Early 2010s Self-tracking trend starts with Fitness/Wellness apps and devices

2016 The European Union adopts the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) [3]

2018

2016–2018 Startups like Ada Health are starting to enter the consumer health market in Germany [4]

2017 WHO mHealth Report by Director General: Vision for mHealth to play major role in universal access to quality health care systems particularly for hard-to reach populations [5]

Sep 2018 Apple launches its iWatch series 4 as the first FDA-approved consumer device with the ECG function [6]

2019

May 2019 German Health Minister Jens Spahn publicly announces that patients should benefit from useful mHealth in health care as soon as possible [7]

2019 The global femtech market size is valued at USD 18.75 Billion [8]

2020

2019–2020 The Global market share for Fitness/Wellness self-tracking increases by 48.8% [9]

2019 Digital Healthcare Act (Digitale-Versorgung-Gesetz, DVG) is introduced. This makes Germany worldwide the first country to have a health app prescription-scheme. [10]

2021

Dec 2020 Researchers publish a study in New England Journal of Medicine demonstrating racial bias in pulse oximetry measurement [11]

2021 Period tracking app Flo shares sensitive health data with Facebook and Google [12]

2020 Covid-19 tracing app 20 million downloads in Germany [13]

2022

2023 Global mHealth market size reaches 21,1 Billion USD. [14]

2025 DiGA Directory
Permanently Accepted: 18
Provisionally Accepted: 29
Deleted: 6 [15]

2030 Global mHealth market size projected to reach 158,3 Billion USD [16]

2023

2024

MEDA Research project 2018–2024

01.04.2018 Beginning of MEDA-Project

2018–2019 Study on apps responding to violence against women and girls

2018–2020 Ethical analysis of informed consent and terms of use in mHealth

2019 Tereza Hendl: Research stay at the Ethox Centre, University of Oxford

2019–2020 Critical empirical and normative analysis of period-tracking and fertility apps

1.–3.7.2019 International Conference at LMU/TUM: Digital behavioral technologies, vulnerability, and justice

2019–2023 Empirical study on open-source mHealth for Type 1 Diabetes

2019 Launch of webpage about-mhealth.net

2019–2024 Qualitative study on physician-patient relationship in diabetology

27.–28.10.2021 Workshop at Fondation Brocher, Switzerland: The Ethics of mHealth as a global phenomenon

2020–2023 Qualitative interview study on values, norms and motivations of mHealth developers and start ups with fieldwork in Germany, India and the United States

April 2022 Bianca Jansky: Research stay at the University of California, Berkeley

2020–2025 Quantitative study on experiences and opinions of physicians on mHealth (focus on mental health and diabetology)

5.–6.10.2023 Conference: mHealth und Ethik. Im Dialog mit Politik, Praxis und Wissenschaft. Harnack-Haus der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, Berlin

Feb–April 2023 Verina Wild: Research stay Rutgers University, USA

2024 Future Edited Book – mHealth: intersectional ethics for a global society

30.11.2024 End of MEDA-Project

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[4] Hanneken, J. (2018). Market Access von digitalen Start-Up-Produkten im deutschen Gesundheitswesen. In: Pfannstiel, M., Jaeckel, R., Da-Cruz, P. (eds) Innovative Gesundheitsversorgung und Market Access. Springer Gabler, Wiesbaden. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-15981-1_14
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[9] https://www.emergenresearch.com/industry-report/femtech-market
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[14] https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/mhealth-market (accessed July 10 2025)
[15] https://diga.bfarm.de/de/verzeichnis?type=%5B%5D (accessed July 10 2025)
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This timeline represents selected items only, both on the left and on the right side along the arrow.

about-mhealth.net

uni-augsburg.de/en/fakultaet/med/profs/professur-fur-ethik-der-medizin/forschungsthemen/MEDA-project