“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent. It is the one that is most adaptable to change.”

Charles Darwin

As technology becomes more accessible and advanced, the emergence of digital health is making its mark. The pharmacist's voice is always missing when discussions on digital health are being held. Pharmacists must view the advent of technology as a positive in that it will provide them with more time and ability to interact with and counsel more patients. It will also offer them greater visibility in the hospital environment and magnify their clinical knowledge and roles. This will only be possible if pharmacists become amenable to all these technological changes. There is no doubt that these technologies, whether it is automation that can fill prescriptions or applications that can provide treatment guidelines and medicines information, may one day replace the traditional role of pharmacists. We have seen how complacency has affected many brands and disrupted industries that failed to embrace technology and innovations in comparison to those who welcomed it.

Since technology in hospital pharmacy is still in its early stages, it is imperative that pharmacists take the bull by its horns and take the lead in providing resources and pharmacist-created content when it comes to developing tools for patients and service providers. Essentially pharmacists are in an influential position to use technology to advance the profession. There is a slow progression, though, of adoption of new advancements which are developed in partnership with outsiders who have identified opportunities. Pharmacists need to pay attention to opportunities where technologies can be incorporated into pharmacy practice. This will serve as a great strategic opportunity towards forward thinking. As pharmacists we need to become involved as early as possible in the development process and thus be able to take ownership of the technology. If we don't, other people will take these opportunities and start dictating to us how pharmacy must be practised.

The evolution of pharmacy over the years has seen pharmacists transforming from just being those who fill prescriptions, to people with a large amount of clinical knowledge who can advise how to take medicines safely and how to manage chronic conditions. However, most pharmacists are still devoted to reviewing prescriptions and dispensing medicines, leaving the application of clinical knowledge at the backend. The question therefore is, can the disruption caused by this advent of technology appropriate the dispensing of medicines? Many argue that this is not possible because the law still protects the role of pharmacists as legal dispensers of medicines. Nevertheless, pharmacists should not be complacent in that position because influential companies dealing in artificial intelligence or data analytics can develop systems that verify the correctness of prescriptions (e-prescribing) which can undermine or replace pharmacists’ current roles. Those companies, by demonstrating the accuracy and speed of their products, may seek to lobby for aspects of current laws and regulations should be repealed or revised. Overall, much needs to be done to stimulate development and to encourage collaboration across all pharmacy groups to leverage technology as an advantage in order that pharmacies may remain sustainable in the future.