

News and Perspectives

China's AI-Enabled Consumer Health Ecosystems

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Abstract

China is increasingly established as a global leader in consumer-facing AI health care. In this *News and Perspectives* article, JMIR Correspondent Tejas S Athni reports on the features of some of the country's largest AI-enabled consumer health platforms.

Key Takeaways:

- China's leading consumer health platforms have evolved into comprehensive AI-enabled consumer health ecosystems rather than stand-alone AI applications.
- Ping An Good Doctor, JD Health, Alibaba Health, and WeDoctor each leverage a different consumer platform—insurance, e-commerce, online pharmacy, and messaging, respectively—to deliver health care at scale.

Tejas S Athni is an MD-PhD candidate at Harvard Medical School. In this article, he provides an overview of 4 of China's largest AI-enabled consumer health ecosystems.

While consumer-facing health AI [assistants](#) are becoming increasingly sophisticated in the United States, they have largely functioned as stand-alone applications. In China, several established consumer health platforms have evolved into AI-enabled ecosystems, integrating telemedicine, pharmacy services, hospital scheduling, and chronic disease management. Several of these ecosystems serve hundreds of millions of users and post tens of billions of yuan in annual revenue, making them among the largest digital health enterprises in the world.

China's Landscape

China's emergence as a leader in the AI-enabled consumer health space has been incentivized and driven in part by structural factors unique to its health care system: a significant shortage of physicians relative to its population (just over 4 million physicians for a population of more than 1.4 billion), stark geographic disparities in hospital quality between urban and rural areas, and chronically overburdened outpatient facilities that see some of the highest patient volumes in the world. Further, China's National Health [Commission](#) has established a regulatory framework specifically governing "internet hospitals," requiring digital platforms to anchor online services to a licensed physical hospital. Many of China's consumer health ecosystems are embedded within pre-existing [consumer](#) networks (eg, insurance, e-commerce, messaging apps), which has hastened digital patient access to health care services. These features have shaped how each of the platforms below are structured.



...The competitive frontier in consumer health AI is less about any single model or feature, but rather about how deeply AI can be integrated into the full arc of care.

Ping An Good Doctor

Founded in 2014 by Ping An Group, one of the world's largest comprehensive financial services and insurance firms, [Ping An Good Doctor integrates](#) AI-powered symptom assessment, virtual physician services, chronic disease management, specialist referral, prescription services, and medication delivery. Patients primarily access the platform through a mobile app. Core capabilities include an AI Doctor feature powered by a proprietary Medical Master large language [model](#), online-to-offline connector services to real-world care, Xin Yi digital [avatars](#) of real-world physicians, and AI triage that handles initial patient contact before routing to human doctors. The platform has over 400 million registered [users](#).

Ping An Good Doctor's primary user base includes retail insurance customers of its parent company, corporate employees, and families through its [family](#) doctor membership program. Its consumer revenue model operates on two tracks: (1) a business-to-consumer (B2C) channel in which

individual users access AI-assisted consultations, family doctor services, and medication delivery through its consumer platform, with many services integrated into the insurance and financial products offered by Ping An Group; and (2) a business-to-business (B2B) channel in which corporate clients pay to provide employees with health management plans, chronic disease programs, and on-demand physician access. Per-consultation fees apply across both tracks. Ping An Good Doctor operates under China's Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL), often described as comparable to the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and broader than the United States's Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

JD Health

JD Health, the health care arm of China's largest retailer by revenue, JD.com, was formally [launched](#) in 2017, operating as an independent subsidiary from 2019. The JD Health mobile app integrates online pharmacy services, telemedicine, hospital appointment scheduling, chronic disease management, and rapid prescription fulfillment through a nationwide logistics network. In January 2025, the company introduced its [AI Jingyi suite](#) for consumer-facing health care interactions, including a large language model-powered AI Doctor Digital Twin tool for patients. The platform also hosts [Citrus](#), a proprietary model to help consumers craft personalized nutrition plans and analyze dietary needs. The platform has over 200 million annual active users and a daily online AI consultation volume [exceeding](#) 500,000.

JD Health's primary user base includes urban consumers, particularly those residing in lower-tier [cities](#), patients with chronic disease, seniors through a [dedicated](#) Elderly Care Channel, and digitally savvy younger users. Its on-demand and online-to-offline [delivery](#) network spans over 400 cities and 200,000 pharmacies across China. Its primary revenue model centers on direct online sales of pharmaceuticals and health products, with supplementary revenue from per-consultation fees for its internet hospital and AI doctor services, as well as from subscription products sold to individual users. JD Health is subject to PIPL.

Alibaba Health

Founded in 2014, Alibaba Health is the global tech conglomerate Alibaba Group's [flagship](#) consumer-facing digital health platform, accounting for roughly 45% of China's online pharmaceutical retail [market](#) by gross merchandise value. The ecosystem integrates AI-enabled medication management, online pharmacy services, health care commerce, telemedicine, and chronic disease management. Patients

primarily access the platform through the Tmall Health marketplace and the Yilu [app](#), while Alibaba's [Quark](#) Health Assistant acts as an intelligent personal medical guide and provides symptom guidance. Distinct from Ping An Good Doctor and JD Health, Alibaba Health centers on a [cloud-based](#) pharmacy and cloud-based hospital model, with over 3000 [collaborating](#) pharmaceutical partners extending its capabilities. The platform has over 300 million annual active [users](#).

Alibaba Health's primary users include consumers purchasing medications and wellness products online, individuals managing long-term health needs, and patients seeking convenient access to digital health care through Alibaba's broader consumer ecosystem. Its consumer [revenue](#) model is built primarily on direct online pharmaceutical and wellness product retail through Tmall Health and self-operated storefronts, with additional income from per-consultation fees on the Yilu app and commissions from third-party merchants in its consumer marketplace. Alibaba Health is subject to PIPL.

WeDoctor

Founded in 2010 and backed by the Chinese tech giant Tencent, [WeDoctor](#) integrates telemedicine, AI-assisted consultations, chronic disease management, prescription services, and hospital appointment scheduling. The WeDoctor mobile app allows users to connect with physicians and access follow-up care. The platform is [integrated](#) with WeChat, a messaging app with approximately 1.4 billion monthly active [users](#), providing a significant distribution advantage. WeChat already functions as a primary medium for daily communication, payments, and social interaction across China, thereby reducing the adoption friction that stand-alone health apps typically face. WeDoctor centers on connecting patients directly with a nationwide network of health care providers, [cooperating](#) with more than 7800 hospitals and over 270,000 registered [doctors](#), of whom approximately 150,000 can provide online diagnosis and treatment. The platform has more than 240 million registered [users](#).

WeDoctor primarily serves consumers seeking convenient access to outpatient care, specialist consultations, and longitudinal care. The platform primarily generates revenues through AI medical services delivered and a value-based [capitation](#) arrangement with municipal governments. The model aligns WeDoctor's financial incentives directly with patient health [outcomes](#) rather than volume of services rendered, a departure from the fee-for-service logic underpinning most other AI-enabled consumer health platforms in China. WeDoctor operates under PIPL.

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ECOSYSTEM	YEAR FOUNDED	PARENT COMPANY SECTOR	USER BASE	REVENUE MODEL	SERVICES AND CAPABILITIES
Ping An Good Doctor <i>Ping An Group</i>	2014	Financial Services & Insurance	~ Over 400M registered users	B2C channel: Individual users on consumer platform. B2B channel: Corporate clients pay to provide employees with health management plans, chronic disease programs, and on-demand physician access. Per-consultation fees across both channels.	Online platform + mobile app AI-powered symptom assessment and triage, virtual physician services, chronic disease management, online-to-offline specialist referral, prescription services, medication delivery.
JD Health <i>JD.com</i>	2017 (Independent subsidiary 2019)	Retail/ E- Commerce	~ Over 200 million active annual users ~ Over 500,000 daily online AI consultation s	Direct online sales (pharmaceuticals, online health products) Supplementary revenue: Per- consultation fees for internet hospital and AI doctor services, subscription products sold to individual users	Mobile app + chatbots Dedicated Elderly Care Channel Online-to-offline delivery network across >400 cities, >200,000 pharmacies Online pharmacy services, telemedicine, hospital appointment scheduling, chronic disease management, rapid prescription fulfillment, healthcare interactions, personalized nutrition plans, dietary analysis
Alibaba Health <i>Alibaba Group</i>	2014	Online Retail Pharmacy/ E- Commerce	~ Over 300 million active annual users	Direct online and storefront retail (pharmaceuticals, wellness products) Per-consultation fees on Yilu app Consumer marketplace commissions (from third-party merchants)	Online health marketplace + app + AI chat assistant Network of >3,000 pharmacies AI-enabled medication management, online cloud-based pharmacy services, healthcare commerce, telemedicine, chronic disease management
WeDoctor <i>WeDoctor Group</i>	2010	Messaging/ Social Media	~ Over 240 million registered users	AI medical services delivered Value-based capitation arrangement with municipal government (outcome- based, not fee-for-service).	Mobile app (integrated with WeChat) Network of >7,800 hospitals, >270,000 registered physicians Telemedicine, AI-assisted consultations, chronic disease management, prescription services, hospital appointment scheduling and follow-up care
All ecosystems subject to PIPL. Accurate at time of publication. Created with JMIR Correspondent Tejas S. Athni, MS.					
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Summary of major AI-enabled consumer health ecosystems in China

Integrated Ecosystems

China's consumer-facing health AI ecosystems represent a different model of digital health than the platforms that have emerged in the United States. Each of these 4 large ecosystems—Ping An Good Doctor, JD Health, Alibaba Health, and WeDoctor—leverage established platforms with hundreds

of millions of pre-existing users, whether for insurance, shopping, or communication. As AI continues to advance, these platforms demonstrate that the competitive frontier in consumer health AI is less about any single model or feature, but rather about how deeply AI can be integrated into the full arc of care.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; AI; consumer health; digital health ecosystems; internet hospitals; China; digital health platforms; AI-enabled health; health AI

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