

Hospital Roundup: Dr Chalerm Harnphanich, Bangkok Chain Hospital

How the Thai hospitals group plans to expand its business.



Bangkok Chain Hospital runs 10 hospitals across Thailand. GovInsider caught up with Dr Chalerm Harnphanich, CEO of Bangkok Chain Hospital, to find about the hospitals' achievements and his key priorities.

What are your biggest achievements of 2015?

The company has successfully grown and expanded continuously over 31 years, as of now we have 11 hospitals countrywide. Recently, we opened the Kasemrad Chachoengsao hospital and expanded our business to many market segments. We have three brands in the high-end, middle and low-end market: the World Medical Center which targets premium markets and international patients; the Kasemrad brand which targets middle income patients; and the Karunvej brand which targets social security patients.

What are your key priorities for next year?

Our priorities are to:

- Increase the number of branches (hospitals) and diversify businesses to earn more efficiency and effectiveness. We are planning to open a brand new member of the Kasemrad Hospital Group – ‘Kasemrad Ramkhamhaeng Hospital’ – within the year of 2016.
- Keep developing and improving the quality of services and medical practice technologies to maintain our standard level and up-to-date dynamic business environment, resulting in higher operating performance.
- Keep developing our potential and core community.

What technologies, tools or techniques are you most interested in for the next 6 months, and why?

We have not implemented cloud technologies in our chains, but we are interesting in the technology and are learning more about that. We believe that cloud technologies can help us be highly competitive for these reasons:

- Cost effectiveness: It uses less electricity since data centers are running off-site. Capital costs may be reduced because there is no need to purchase the servers. Maintenance costs may be reduced because there is no hardware in place.
- Managing growth: Cloud resources are scalable or elastic. Therefore we can manage resources or increase capacity to support growth and handle busy periods. One of the most challenging aspects of running a business is predicting what resources your business will need, whether there is enough to scale and take advantage of opportunities or whether we have overspent.

- **Flexibility:** It will give us more opportunity to manage and complete business needs and resource demands. In fact, the cloud can be limitless. Work can be done from anywhere, at any time and on almost any mobile device.
- **Increased Security:** Cloud can deliver a highly secure infrastructure without offloading the requirements needed to be maintained. If we rely on integrated branches and remote employees, it makes sense to use cloud for centralised identity management and access control.
- **Storage:** Due to our business growth, there is more data collection. We have spent more on people and time to manage all of that data and information. Cloud will help us in terms of computing capacity to store large amounts of data off-site. The benefits are not only the centralised data storage, but also for disaster recovery.

In which area do sensor and robotics have the most potential?

Sensor and robotics technology have the most potential in patient engagement for healthcare businesses. Telemedicine or Virtual Doctor is the most interesting for improving patient engagement. To support the ASEAN Economic Community, Bangkok Chain Hospital has a plan to use telemedicine to integrate healthcare among ASEAN countries.

To what extent has the Bangkok Chain Hospital adopted digital patient records?

Bangkok Chain Hospital began implementing electronic health records 10 years ago. Now we are developing a full electronic health records system to support a paperless policy.

The company gives high priority to the electronic health records system because we are accredited by Joint Commission International standards and DNV GL standards. We also

have a plan to comply with the Healthcare Information and Management System Society standard in the next 3 years.

We would like to compile a variety of different materials on the factors and trends in the use of electronic health records.

We would also like to adopt technology for supply chain, order Management, data management and reporting, quality outcomes, patient safety, governance, privacy and security, care transformation, integration, and financial results in our electronic health records system.

What impact have digital patient records had on the hospitals?

The goal of implementing electronic health records was to improve efficiency, patient safety, and reduce healthcare costs. The benefits associated with the electronic health records system are numerous and we have highlighted three outcomes:

- Clinical outcomes are improvements in quality of care, patient safety, and patient outcome measures.
- Organisational outcomes are also seen in improved patient and healthcare provider satisfaction, and efficient financial and operational performance.
- And societal outcomes are improved data collection through research and support of evidence-based care.