

Hospital-to-Home: A new healthcare solution

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Mr Arjen Radder, president, Philips Healthcare, APAC, talks about Royal Philips' initiatives to make healthcare accessible to everyone with ease, in the wake of growing healthcare challenges.

Why has Singapore been chosen to establish the headquarters for the Royal Philips Hospital-to-Home (H2H) business?

Mr Radder: In the Asia-Pacific region, Singapore presents the right conditions to establish the competence center for our highly innovative Hospital-to-Home program. Singapore serves as a reference site for its established healthcare system and as the healthcare hub for the region.

Singapore care system is centered on the principle of shared ownership and joint responsibility between individual, family, community, and government for healthcare outcomes. Philips H2H shares that principle as well.

We seek to improve patient's involvement and increase self-management of health. Singapore's forward looking healthcare system encourages co-innovation between healthcare providers and industry players like Philips; that is why we chose to establish our regional base there.

What gave birth to this new innovation?

Mr Radder: Philips is dedicated to creating the future of healthcare by developing innovative solutions in partnership with clinicians and our customers to improve patient outcomes, to provide better value, and to expand access. Philips is uniquely positioned to facilitate optimal connections among care providers, enabling a shift from the traditional inpatient/outpatient mindset, to a single, quality-extended healthcare experience where recovery is shortened and the risk of re-hospitalization is lowered, especially for chronically ill patients. We have great expertise in healthcare data analytics, too, to enable predictive and timely interventions, delivering accurate answers at the time of need, and detecting critical issues before they become full-blown emergencies.

Philips understands that people would much rather stay at home than be admitted to the hospital due to high costs. We develop innovative solutions across the continuum of care in partnership with clinicians and our customers to improve patient outcomes, provide better value, and expand access to care. Therefore, we are focusing our innovation lens on clinical programs around re-admission avoidance. We call these Hospital-to-Home solutions that are tailored to the local care ecosystem and literally bridge the hospital and the home for a truly patient-centered care model.

How are you going to proceed further in terms of spreading it in Asia?

Mr Radder: Singapore is at the heart of Asia and is often looked at as the benchmark for care systems innovation. As a country, Singapore is constantly disrupting and innovating itself and as such, key learnings from here is often spread across to the other markets. With an integrated approach to healthcare by Philips, key takeaways will be shared through our Singapore competence center for the region. We aim to disseminate and co-create H2H solutions with healthcare professionals across the region.

Also relevant for the broader region, we see a critical shortage of medical staff as a major issue in many markets in Asia. Philips H2H will help train and educate healthcare professionals to not only help them in their daily workflows but also offer consulting services to improve operational and financial performance of hospitals and health systems. The key benefit of having this capability in Singapore is that it will see regular updates and learning can be easily shared with professionals across the region; we directly and indirectly want to influence the rise in quality of healthcare by thinking of the home as a natural extension of care continuum.

What are the challenges that you are likely to face while implementing this innovative and interesting concept?

Mr Radder: The future of healthcare worldwide is fueled by the fact that we are growing older, we are getting sicker, and the global demand and cost of care is increasing. Chronic illnesses are rising faster in this region than globally and the sheer number of people requiring care is staggering. This is disproportionately affecting developing markets like South East Asia and at Philips, we hope we can work in tandem with developed and developing markets to address the healthcare challenges and provide innovative solutions throughout the region. We have a common goal: we want people to be healthy, live well, and enjoy life as we tackle the undeniable challenge of quality affordable care.

How has been the Singapore Economic Development Board's attitude towards this project?

Mr Radder: Singapore is known for its capability to reinvent itself - at the core of such innovations are leading government entities like the EDB, who for years have helped policy makers steer the country towards the most exciting and future-oriented economic sectors. It is not different with healthcare, where EDB and local government play a key role in organizing policy and creating the right conditions for innovation to flourish.

How is the healthcare industry going to evolve in the coming years?

Mr Radder: The aging population and their increased burden on the healthcare system have driven a level of need not experienced by South-East Asia in the past. A rapidly aging population, coupled with an expanding middle class and the rise of NCDs - with limited resources in the healthcare sector across the region - has led to increased access and quality but at increasingly accelerating economic cost to the society. Basic insurance is not common, healthcare systems are developing continuously, and this has an impact on affordability for many.

While countries can continue to add more hospital beds and attempt to train more doctors and nurses, it is not a sustainable approach to meet the level of healthcare that an aging population demands. The rise of chronic diseases is also straining healthcare resources, as they are the most common and costly of health problems. The solution to provide care for more patients with existing healthcare resources is straightforward - of, maximize the utilization and take benefit of the current medical resources by managing patients from home and reduce their length of stay and mortality rates.

What are the future plans of Royal Philips and are there any collaborations in the pipeline?

Mr Radder:

At the moment, the most urgent need of the healthcare sector in the region is to focus on providing the public with access to affordable healthcare services. As the region continues to age rapidly, especially among developed countries, and will see more need for home healthcare solutions. Monitoring and managing patients from their home will ease the burden on healthcare institutions. Philips also works continuously to help cater to the needs of healthcare institutions in developing markets, especially healthcare institutions in rural areas, and introduces innovative solutions to these markets.

By bringing together expertise from across our businesses, our ambition is to deliver innovative solutions like Hospital-to-Home that connect and empower the entire care teams, patients, families, friends, and providers. Our goal is to improve the system for clinicians, patients, and caregivers. As such, Philips is introducing healthcare innovations that will help health systems in Asia to address the growing challenges linked to a fast growing and aging population.