Korea’s next export engine: Digital Hospital

Introduction:
Nurses walk nimbly in a hallway of wards with charts in their hands. The typical scene of a hospital has been disappearing in Gangnam General Hospital since designated as a pilot Digital Hospital by the Ministry of Knowledge Economy (MKE). This hospital is well equipped with Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS), Electronic Medical Record (EMR), and Order Communication System (OCS). Digitalized data of each patient’s condition is transferred to a central monitoring system, saving time and effort from delivering charts. A hospital official said, “An alarm will sound if any problem occurs in an intensive care unit and at the same time, it will show what type of problem it is without visiting the patient”. The Digital Hospital is going to be Korea’s next export engine targeting Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East Asia, South America, North Africa and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Details:
The Digital Hospital is an IT-based hospital that connects all of its digital medical equipment with a standardized program to increase the efficiency of the hospital operations, diagnosis and treatment.

Figure 1. System structure of Digital Hospital
The strategy of the Digital Hospital is exporting an entire hospital with maximized efficiency by IT convergence instead of exporting separate medical equipments. The IT-based complex integrated with medical equipment, medical information system, hospital management system and architecture is a strong competitiveness of the Digital Hospital.

Generally, the hospital industry consists of 5% of medical equipment, 5% of medical supplies, 15% of medicine and 75% of medical service. The medical service has been the least related to IT. However, using Korea’s strengths, IT and construction, the IT-based service can maximize its competitiveness.

The demand of new hospitals in the world, especially in developing countries, is over 155 billion Euros. However, there is no leader in the market. The Digital Hospital aims to become a leader of the market and it is expected to solve the trade deficit in medical industry and create annually 100,000 jobs after 2015.

Detailed introduction of the Digital Hospital by Korea Digital Hospital Export Agency (KOHEA) will be posted in the following newsflash.

Resources and more information:

Korea Digital Hospital Export Agency (KOHEA) - www.kohea.co.kr
Korea IT Service Industry Association (ITSA) - www.itsa.or.kr
Korea Times - http://news.hankooki.com/
Electronic Times - http://www.etnews.com/