

**DISSATISFACTION GUARANTEED**

HONG KONG



Hong Kong may be pressured to improve its public healthcare system as millennials clamour for improvements. 47% of them said that they are “quite unsatisfied” or “very unsatisfied” with the public healthcare system, according to Medix Medical Monitor Research. To make matters more rattling for Hong Kong’s healthcare professionals, 37% of the older working generation shared the same sentiment. Those who were dissatisfied with the healthcare system said they would prefer shorter waiting time for specialist consultations and treatments. An additional 23% of all respondents said they would like to see further strengthening and expansion of the public medical system, whilst 6% said they wanted to have the ability to choose their own doctor. Even the private healthcare sector did not go past the respondents’ eyes as 14% said they were “quite unsatisfied” or “very unsatisfied” with private care. Respondents also urged the private medical sector to pull down their costs (22%) and improve overall transparency (12%).

**Don’t ask, don’t tell**

Respondents are also having issues with being open to their doctors as majority of those interviewed in the study admitted to being reluctant to question specialists. Only half feel comfortable asking their doctors any questions, although women (58%) seem to be better placed in posing questions than men (50%). Sigal Atzmon, president of Medix Medical Services Group, says it is worrying that only half are comfortable with directly asking questions or raising doubts on health issues with their specialist. “This could have important implications for the care they receive, and the outcome for them and their family. Improvement of the transparency of the health system as information about clinical outcomes is lacking,” she adds.



Make way for Dr Robot

**A robot a day keeps the doctor away**

SINGAPORE

A trip to hospital for a rehabilitation appointment in Singapore could soon be a thing of the past as the country rolls out a home based telemedicine rehabilitation service. Called the Smart Health TeleRehab, the service allows patients to undergo their rehabilitation exercises at a time and location of their choice, through the use of wearable sensors and remote monitoring by therapists. “Smart Health TeleRehab could transform how therapy services are delivered in Singapore,” says Chee Hong Tat, senior minister of state for health, after visiting the home of a patient to view how Smart Health TeleRehab was deployed. The technology was developed by the National University of Singapore (NUS) Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering Technology and the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health and works by detecting and measuring motor movements with sensors and algorithms enabling immediate feedback to patients on whether they are performing the exercises

**Technology use in eldercare reduces the reliance of trained healthcare manpower.**



correctly. A video conferencing feature is available to enable patients to consult therapists remotely and therapists are able to review their patients’ progress asynchronously via smart dashboards. “Patients will benefit from greater convenience, cost savings, and better outcomes. Therapists and therapy service providers will also benefit from the productivity improvements,” Chee says.

**Robotics for geriatric care**

Singapore is also applying the use of robotics to geriatric care, another growing need which can be more easily and cost effectively serviced from home. Dr Tan Jit Seng, director, Lotus Eldercare Health Services says technology use in eldercare reduces the reliance of trained healthcare manpower by empowering the patients and their family on the care supported by timely input of information to patients and their families or continual monitoring of chronic disease and early warning of flares or decompensation. “For instance, some elderly care facilities already use robots like Ohmni, ExoAtlet, and Loomo. Ohmni allows family members and caregivers to engage remotely over the Internet and check on the elders’ safety and make sure they follow their diet or medication. Geriatric specialists can also dial-in on-demand simultaneously to provide services. ExoAtlet, meanwhile, uses robotics for exoskeletal support, doing away with the stigma of using a wheelchair,” she said. Singapore is particularly pressed for healthcare manpower, so expect to see more use of robotics and home based telemedicine to ease the burden on hospitals.

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