Lot Would Revolutionise Healthcare, Say Experts

The Internet of Things (IoT) is expected to revolutionise the healthcare services industry in the coming years, experts taking part in the BW Businessworld Healthcare Summit said on Thursday.

Estimated to be valued at $2.5 trillion per year by 2025, IoT will change the accessibility and reach of healthcare services.

Reinforcing the importance of technology, the summit, held in Delhi, had a panel discussion on the impact of IoT on medicalservices.

Dr Sanjeev Bagai, pediatrician and Padmashree awardee, said hospitals will have to rely more on IoT connectivity in the the future.

He said information technology has the power to cover human resource deficiencies, and link hospitals in tie-2 and tier-3 cities with top medical centres located in major cities, and greatly improve clinical results.

The so-called IoT is a network of devices connected by wireless technology. According to industry projections, there will be 20 billion IoT devices such as home appliances, medical machines and entertainment equipment, by 2020 compared with about six billion at present.

Niranjan Kumar Ramakrishnan, CIO of Sir Gangaram Hospital, said, "The problem is that there are too many innovations and it becomes difficult for us to select which one to go for and which one to reject."

"I would like to say to developers to be specific what they want to sell us, else in the quest of developing everything, they will loose time and money," he added.

Dr Sangeeta Saxena, professor and head of the Department of Radio Diagnosis at Government Medical College in Kota, said, "IoT is not a hype. It is the need of the hour. It will bridge the gap between rural and urban healthcare as nobody wants to go rural."

Dr R.S. Uberoi, chief quality officer at Apollo Hospitals Group, stated: "There are numerous benefits of IoT. It brings down cost, improves treatment, gives us real time data, but there is a big problem which needs to be dealt with. There is a huge volume of data which needs to be organised."

On the future of IoT, Bagai said all hospitals should have a system wherein doctors can be made efficient in IT use.

Dr Archana Patil, CMD of Lifecare Hospital, said urban healthcare should support rural healthcare.

"Rural people also deserve equal treatment," she said.