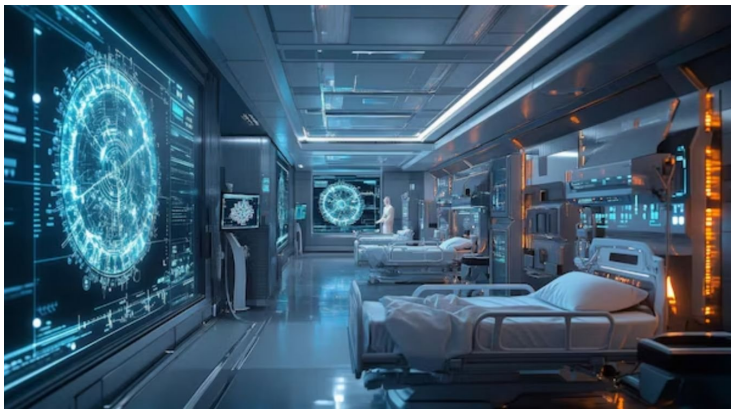
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Korea introduces public healthcare AI network to connect regional hospitals

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Pilot implementation this year, with 35 public hospitals to be connected in 2027 and nationwide expansion to all 72 public hospitals by 2029



The Ministry of Health and Welfare (MoHW), South Korea government, recently held a launch ceremony for the National Public Healthcare AI Network pilot. The event featured a real-time connection between Kangwon National University Hospital in Chuncheon and Yeongwol Medical Center in Yeongwol via an online platform. The demonstration showcased the use of three artificial intelligence (AI) agents throughout the patient care process, from inter-hospital transfers and surgery to discharge and referral back to local hospitals.

Following this year's pilot, the MoHW plans to launch the full-scale programme in 2027 and connect 35 public hospitals. By 2029, it aims to complete the network across all 72 public hospitals nationwide, including regional public medical centres.

The pilot launch marks the first on-site implementation of the government's AI-Based Healthcare Strategy, announced in August this year. This initiative lays the foundation for the AI transformation (AX) of public healthcare by bringing advanced clinical AI agent technologies directly to regional public hospitals, including those in Yeongwol and Chuncheon.

The MoHW will roll out the National Public Healthcare AI Network in stages, starting with network construction, followed by pilot validation and full implementation. It plans to connect the eight hospitals participating in the pilot by the end of this year and expand the network to up to 35 public hospitals starting in April next year. The MoHW plans to expand the network in stages until it connects all 72 public hospitals nationwide, including regional public medical centers and Red Cross hospitals.