

APAC healthcare industry becomes cloud friendly

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Singapore: A recent report presented by Frost & Sullivan has said that the healthcare industry in Asia Pacific is embracing the full gamut of cloud provided services from infrastructure to software with great enthusiasm. The industry analysis firm has said that it is tipping the market to expand at a whopping 22.3 percent annually from its 2012 value of \$194 million until 2018. It predicts that cloud will be the single most important enabler of healthcare megatrends in the future.

"Healthcare is opening doors to cloud technologies all over the world and Asia-Pacific is in a hurry to explore innovative solutions that support patient-centric care through efficient capture and dissemination of medical and health information," the report said. It further added, "Cloud technologies will play a pivotal role in establishing the healthcare industry of the future."

Ms Natasha Gulati, connected health industry analyst with Frost & Sullivan Asia Pacific, has said that healthcare providers are looking for reliable technology partners who can address their concerns over data privacy and security.

"While many healthcare IT vendors emphasize the enhanced security and back-up support provided by cloud technologies the message has not successfully reached hospital CIOs yet. This is why healthcare continues to invest in private clouds while other industries are rapidly moving to public or hybrid cloud models. Moreover, given the current pressures of rising costs and diminishing margins, healthcare CIOs are unable to justify the significant investment required for transitioning to a cloud environment," she said.

The report has identified three major industry transformations that would be catalyzed by cloud solutions: healthcare industry vertical clouds, telehealth and remote patient monitoring, and the consumerization of healthcare.

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Healthcare industry vertical clouds are secure cloud environments that allow health information sharing amongst all healthcare stakeholders, thus delivering efficiencies at all stages of the value chain. Particularly in developed countries, the rapidly ageing populations are driving the need for comprehensive and reliable monitoring technologies and services that will enable ageing people to remain in their own homes longer rather than imposing a burden on what is certain to become an

overstretched healthcare system.

The report added that cloud technologies provide the software and infrastructure required to share vital information over a distance, to enable real-time analysis of information gathered from remotely located systems so that critical physiological data can be captured by telemedicine and patient monitoring devices and actioned on the fly thus minimizing the time taken to respond to critical incidents.