

A Journey Through Healthcare's Evolution: Reflections and a Vision for Asia

Portfolio Director of MEDICARE ASIA Shirley Lim reflects on the ascent of the Asian healthcare market and highlights new growth opportunities.



What compels someone to stay on in a career for nearly 30 years?

My journey in healthcare trade shows began in 1997 with Medical Fair Asia in Singapore. The inaugural event, which I spearheaded, made me realise my passion in creating opportunities for healthcare innovations to benefit humanity.

Over the years, with every event, I have had a ringside seat to new developments in the industry. It is a journey that continues to inspire and energise me, largely due to the relentless pace of innovation and the tangible impact we see on lives and communities.

One of the most profound shifts I've witnessed is in the meteoric growth of the Asian healthcare market, which is projected to reach US\$3 trillion by 2030¹.

Asia's Healthcare Renaissance

Today, China, India, and Japan are no longer just participants but have become major drivers of global healthcare advancements.

This growth has been fuelled by rising incomes, aging populations, increasing demand for quality healthcare services and significant government and private investment in infrastructure, technology, and research.

It has been incredibly satisfying to see Asian countries evolve into hubs for clinical trials and medical tourism, contributing significantly to the global healthcare ecosystem.

Moving in parallel with this shift has been a corresponding digital revolution in healthcare in Asia.

¹ <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2025/india-the-unmissable-asia-healthcare-opportunity>

Electronic health records have evolved from paper to integrated digital systems, while telemedicine rapidly moved from experimental application to mainstream usage during the pandemic. Basic fitness trackers have advanced into sophisticated health apps and wearables that integrate with healthcare systems.

This digital transformation also underpins the move towards precision medicine, tailoring treatments to individual genetic profiles.

These advancements—particularly the rise of digital and AI healthcare—have had and will continue to have a huge impact in Asia.

Given its vast and diverse population, the region stands to gain immensely not only from telemedicine, remote monitoring and health informatics but also from AI-powered predictive analytics and machine learning that can diagnose diseases more accurately, personalise treatment plans and streamline clinical workflows.

All this promises a continuing transformation in healthcare in Asia as technologies are used to address healthcare disparities, improve healthcare delivery and create a more efficient, patient-centric healthcare system.

A Unified Platform and Bridge

That is the reason why we have positioned ourselves to drive industry change. It is a phase of my career that I am most excited about.

MEDICARE ASIA, for which I am the Portfolio Director, was formed in September 2024. This umbrella organization unifies Messe Düsseldorf's nine medical and healthcare trade fairs across Asia in Singapore, Thailand, China, and India and connects them directly to our globally leading MEDICA, COMPAMED, and REHACARE shows in Düsseldorf.

Exhibitors, buyers, and industry leaders will benefit from a seamless, centralised platform where they can present themselves, connect with, and share healthcare innovations across multiple markets.

Growth Opportunities

Looking ahead, two key trends will shape the trajectory of the Asian healthcare market, and these present valuable opportunities:

- **Healthcare beyond the hospitals:** Governments are increasingly focused on "Smart Healthcare" - data-enabled, interconnected systems that provide faster access to treatment and more accurate diagnoses. This means our exhibitions must showcase more than just traditional medical devices and supplies, to highlight emerging

innovations in AI, big data, automation technology like blockchain for electronic health records, and machine learning.

- **The rise of home care and preventive health:** There is a growing demand for home-based healthcare services, from simple, user-friendly test kits and medical devices for home use to more complex palliative care solutions. This underscores a broader shift where healthcare is increasingly focused on preventive care, not just treatment.

Ultimately, our long-term vision at MEDICARE ASIA is to tap into the burgeoning growth potential of Asia's healthcare markets.

- **Strengthening global leadership:** Building on the success of our flagship Düsseldorf fairs, we are extending our expertise to establish a formidable trade fair network serving both regional and global healthcare stakeholders.
- **Deepening our footprint in Asia:** Given the growing healthcare investment in Southeast Asia, MEDICARE ASIA will leverage its global expertise to serve local industry needs, fostering growth, collaboration, and transformation.
- **Championing Asia's growing influence:** As Asian companies are increasingly prominent at leading medical technology fairs, MEDICARE ASIA will serve as a vital gateway for these companies to connect with global markets.

Our key pillars of growth over the next five years will involve stronger regional engagement through expanded partnerships, capitalising on the shift from West to East as Asia solidifies its role in global healthcare, and pursuing an active expansion and growth strategy through strategic partnerships, potential acquisitions, and new sector launches.

While the past few decades have been marked by unprecedented change and growth, the next decades will be even more exciting.

For us at MEDICARE ASIA, we will not just be witnesses but changemakers, creating new and impactful platforms for connection, innovation, and progress in the Asian healthcare landscape and beyond.

<https://online.flippingbook.com/view/473189789/>