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| **Digital transformation in the health sector to better serve people, says health minister**  HANOI – Digital transformation in the health sector aims to better serve people and help patients access more convenient and high-quality medical services, said Minister of Health at the Ehealth Vietnam Summit 2020 on Wednesday in Hanoi.  “Digital transformation in the medical sector includes the comprehensive application of information technology, with a special focus on modern digital technologies, leading to a positive change in all medical activities of the health sector. We do not set a target on quantity but the main goal is to better serve the people, to access more convenient and high-quality medical services,” said Long.  Long said that despite having to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, the health sector still made efforts in digital transformation and has gained encouraging results in the past year.  In the administrative field, 100 percent of procedures were provided with online public services at level 4, 100 percent of documents at the health ministry have been processed online and applied digital signatures. The ministry will also operate an application for tracking the progress and handling bottlenecks in processing. This will be the driving force for units under the Ministry of Health to perform their duties, according to the report of the health ministry.  “In the future, we commit to cut 30 percent of administrative procedures to create better conditions for people and businesses,” said Long.  In November, the health ministry also launched the medical public portal that pulicises all medical services provided by the health sector. At the moment, people can access and monitor over 62,000 pharmaceutical products, more than 17,000 pieces of medical equipment and materials, more than 93,000 bidding results and prices for medical services announced by more than 1,400 medical facilities.  In the near future, the health ministry will pulicise all retail pharmaceuticals and supplement food prices, helping people easily look up drug prices and compare prices at stores for the most suitable choice.  In COVID-19 pandemic prevention, information technology has contributed greatly to help Vietnam control the pandemic. Vietnam is also one of the first countries to apply electronic medical declarations, Bluezone tracing applications and COVID-19 safety maps.  “Up to now, Vietnam is one of the most successful countries in the fight against COVID-19 with the most economical and effective models,” said the Minister of Health.  Vietnam has launched a remote health examination and treatment network with more than 1,500 medical facilites, helping patients at lower levels access quality services by doctors of upper will participate in the network, including private health facilities.  With personal electronic health records, the Ministry of Health has cooperated with the Vietnam Social Insurance Agency to establish nearly 98 million health records with 42 professional specialties for outpatients. Electronic personal health records will be applied for all outpatients form July next year, according to the Ministry of Health.  “The goal of the health sector is to build a smart health system. Health facilities spend time on medical examination and treatment, not for procedures and paperwork,” added Long.  Speaking at the event, Minister, Chairman of the Government Office Dung highlighted the health ministry as a poineer in a digital transformation and IT application in the prevention of the COVID-19 pandemic.  “In 2020, the Ministry of Health has actively implemented over 55,000 electronic documents, an icrease of 1.5 times over the previous year, over 95 percent of documents have applied digital signatures,” said Dung.  Dung added that in the future, the Government Office will continue to promote digital transformation across the country. The health sector should pay special attention to data security because it is a matter of life and death in digital transformation.  Minister of Information and Communications Hung said that the ministry committed to accompany the Minstry of Health in the digital transformation journey.  “The Ministry of Health shall assign the Ministry of Information and Communications to direct Vietnamese digital technology businesses to bring digital technology into every corner of the health sector. Vietnam has a strong force of digital technology businesses, with nearly 60,000 businesses and over 1 million employees, ready to solve most of the problems of the health sector. A five-year task can be done in a year,” said Hung.  “Digital medicine can solve the problem of healthcare for everyone, anywhere, anytime. This is the greatest dream of mankind. Digital transformation in the health field can realise this dream,” added Hung.  At the event, the Ministry of Health offically launched the V20 grassroots health information management platform and the Vietnam health network.  The Vietnamese health network is like a social network connecting all physicians across the country. The ministry of Health requires each upper-level doctor to make friends and support four doctors at the provincial level, four doctors at the district and two health workers at the commune level.  The V20 application will create a comprehensive change for nearly 12,000 **health clinics** across the country. The application will replace paperwork that requires 50-70 percent of time of medical staff to make reports by paper. From January 2021, it will be applied nationwide.  The summit aimed to make the most of advantages in information technology application, mobilise social resources and seek solutions to promote the rapid, timely and efficient implementation of digital transformation in the medical field in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. | **health clinics:** cáctrạm y tế. |