

Philips Installs First Locally Built CT Scanners in Russia



Royal Philips Electronics and Electron, a leading Russian medical equipment manufacturer, have completed Russia's first installation and clinical validation of a domestically made Computed Tomography (CT) scanner, at the Hospital of War Veterans in St. Petersburg. The launch follows a partnership deal signed by the two companies in May 2010.

The 16-slice Phillips scanner, predicted to image around 17,000 patients a year at The Hospital of War Veterans, was produced at Electron's production facilities in St. Petersburg. Around 15 percent of its high-tech components were made in Russia, however, the companies hope to raise that amount to 51 percent by 2013.

The new scanner installation is a sign that partnerships with Russian firms are starting to bear fruit, and that soon US and global companies will be better able to tap into Russia's growing, multi-million euro imaging market. Research firm Synovate estimates that this year the market could reach half of its 2008 numbers of 800 million euros, or \$1.1 billion, and that in the next few years it will return to 2008 levels. GE said the Russian CT market alone could exceed 1.5 billion rubles, or around \$48.6 million. Demographic factors could also help fuel industry growth. Heart disease and cancer, whose diagnosis and treatment plans often rely on advanced imaging, are leading causes of death in the country.

The scanner has been reported as the first locally produced one to include a Russian language interface and have specifications specifically tailored for the market. However, in September, GE Healthcare and its manufacturing partner Meditsinkie Technologii Ltd. unveiled what they said was Russia's first-ever domestically assembled CT scanner, of which 25 percent of the manufacturing was domestic.

Both companies have high hopes for the future and aim to tap into Russia's imaging market. Philips has already said it was looking to expand its Russian-assembled portfolio to include a 64-slice CT scanner, advanced ultrasounds and even an MRI scanner. On the other hand, Russia hopes that such partnerships will help to reduce its dependence on the import of healthcare equipment.

Published on : Tue, 2 Nov 2010