

New hospital in Heihe to serve Russian patients

A new hospital will be built in Heihe, Heilongjiang province, near the border of China and Russia, to cater to the increasing number of Russians seeking healthcare services in China.

The Heihe China-Russia Friendship Hospital will have 600 beds and is expected to become a top international hospital and develop into a major platform for medical exchanges and cooperation between the two countries, the government of Heihe said.

Sun Hongtao, president of Heihe No 1 People's Hospital, who will serve as president of the new hospital, said approval had been given by the Heilongjiang provincial Health and Family Planning Commission, and that construction is likely to begin next year. It is slated to start providing services in 2019.

A nursing facility that occupies 8.4 hectares and accommodates 800 seniors will be built along with the hospital to provide nursing and healthcare services, he said.

"The hospital and nursing home will mainly receive Chinese and Russians, but they will also accept people from other countries," Sun said.

The hospital will be the only one of its kind in China, he said.

"It will greatly improve medical services for the large number of tourists from Russia in Heihe and neighboring areas," Sun said. "For example, they can be sent to the hospital for proper treatment in case of emergency."

After opening, the hospital will be assisted by Heihe No 1 People's Hospital □the major hospital in the city. Top hospitals and medical schools in China and Russia will also provide support, he said.

Amur Oblast, a Russian territory across the Heilong River from Heihe, also needs such a hospital for some patients, Sun said.

"Some hospitals in Harbin, Heilongjiang's capital, are receiving a great number of Russian patients with cerebral palsy," he said. "We expect Russian patients with the disease will seek treatment at the China-Russia Friendship Hospital in Heihe, since it will be on their doorstep."

Tao Wei, director of the department of oral medicine at Heihe No 1 People's Hospital, said last year that the hospital received more than 600 patients with dental problems from Russia seeking medical treatment.

"Compared with some hospitals in Russia, we offer more convenient services," he said. "A patient can finish a dental implant within five days at our hospital, while in a hospital in Russia it may take weeks or even longer."

More than 8,000 seniors from Russia visited Heihe in the first half of the year for tours and healthcare services, according to the city's publicity department.