

Gov't plans to extend health cover to 75%

HA NOI (VNS) – The Vietnamese Government hopes to achieve 75 per cent health insurance coverage this year and 80 per cent by 2020, Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung said yesterday.



Dung was speaking at a session to review the implementation of the Law on Health Insurance and the blueprint for universal health insurance.

The Ministry of Health reported that in 2014, health insurance covered 71.6 per cent of the population, realising the target of more than over 70 per cent set in the blueprint, but falling short of the 75 per cent mandated by the National Assembly.

The ministry is also making strong efforts to relieve the overloading on hospitals by improving health care administration.

The setting up of hotline in healthcare services has helped improve the reputation of doctors and health workers, including their attitudes towards patients.

Health Minister Nguyen Thi Kim Tien attributed the low coverage to high premiums, the low quality of medical services and bottlenecks in insurance payments.

She said it would be difficult to reach the other 30 per cent of the population without co-operation and initiative from the entire political system.

The official asked the provincial and municipal People's Committees to include health insurance coverage in their lists of socio-economic development goals and provide financial support to families just above the poverty line.

Speaking at the session, PM Dung spoke highly of the efforts exerted to reach 71.6 per cent health insurance coverage and to advance medical service quality.

He stressed the importance of communications to raise responsibility among State agencies and public awareness of health insurance. Meanwhile, ministries and sectors needed to overhaul existing policies to create the best possible conditions for achieving universal insurance coverage.

The leader told the health sector to enhance the quality of grassroots medical services and **apply** information technology in insurance management and distribution to minimise losses for the State budget.

The PM affirmed the Government's determination to reach a target of 80 per cent of people accessing health insurance by 2020 and 75 per cent this year. He also urged the health sector to ensure both quality and quantity in health services.

He asked authorities of all levels and social organisations to continue their plans to improve public

awareness on health insurance. He called for the application of high technology in health insurance management as a way to prevent the State Budget from loss during implementing health insurance. — VNS

Source: <http://vietnamnews.vn/>