

## Thailand Healthcare

# Positive feedback from roadshow and Thai corporate day in KL/SG

## Maintain POSITIVE sector view with PR9 as Top Pick

During 6-8 Jan, we hosted Thai corporate days in KL/SG featuring BDMS and CHG, along with a roadshow in SG regarding healthcare outlook. Most investors agreed on our POSITIVE sector view. While FY25E poses challenges like co-pay and Middle East issues, some stocks now offer attractive valuations, while others, like PR9, maintain a robust outlook. Hence, Thai healthcare remains a BUY sector with solid fundamentals in the eyes of many foreign funds we met. PR9 remains our Top Pick. Among large caps, we prefer BDMS over BH, and for SSO players, CHG over BCH.

## **BDMS** attracts significant interest

BDMS was one of the top firms that received the most investor interest during Thai Corporate Day and our roadshow. The most frequently asked questions focused on the impact of co-pay insurance policies. Management expects co-pay policies to have a limited effect, aligning with our view of a 1-2% impact on total revenue, as not all products will transition to co-pay—only individual policies with excessive claims, particularly for minor ailments. Among large caps, we prefer BDMS, as the factors weighing on the stock appear to have a limited effect, whereas BH faces ongoing uncertainty regarding Middle Eastern patients.

## SSO plays are starting to get on the radar

We were surprised to see increased interest in social security hospitals (which previously attracted almost no attention). Most questions focused on the RW>2 rate and the SSO budget. Some investors see opportunities to buy, aligning with our call that the RW>2 rate will likely return to normal levels, driving robust earnings growth for SSO hospitals in 2025. We prefer CHG over BCH due to its cheaper valuation and lack of overhang from the Kuwaiti patient issues. But some investors were still concerned on the long-term outlook that the SSO may not sustain the THB12k rate despite the SSO's pledge, leading them to stay with cash-paying hospitals.

## PR9, still a rising star in the sector

We received minimal pushback on our PR9 call from foreign funds. Many agree that PR9 offers strong earnings visibility and a long runway for growth. We project a +14% CAGR in FY24-26E, driven by its successful entry into the Middle East market and its post-capex cycle, which provides sufficient capacity for expansion. Given its robust earnings growth, PR9 deserves a higher valuation. That said, not all funds actively follow PR9 due to its relatively small size, and some are less interested because of its relatively low liquidity.

# **POSITIVE**

Unchanged]

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#### Terms defined

SSO - Social Security Office RW>2 - High-cost care contribution by SSO

Co-pay - Insured patient contribution to medical bill

EIA - Environmental impact assessment

Stock	Bloomberg	Mkt cap	Rating	Price	TP	Upside	P/E (x)		P/B (x)		Div yld (%)	
	code	(USD'm)		(LC)	(LC)	(%)	24E	25E	24E	25E	24E	25E
Bangkok Dusit	BDMS TB	11,017	Buy	24.00	31.00	29	24.2	22.5	3.8	3.6	3.0	3.2
Bumrungrad	вн тв	4,477	Buy	195.00	250.00	28	20.2	19.4	5.7	5.0	2.5	2.6
Bangkok Chain	всн тв	1,109	Hold	15.40	18.50	20	27.0	24.5	2.9	2.8	2.0	2.2
Chularat	CHG TB	756	Buy	2.38	3.50	47	23.8	20.9	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.5
Praram 9	PR9 TB	585	Buy	25.75	32.00	24	28.2	24.4	3.7	3.4	1.6	1.8



# Key takeaways of BDMS and CHG from KL/SG Thai Corporate day

#### Bangkok Dusit Medical Services (BDMS TB, Buy, TP THB31)

- Management has a positive long-term outlook, targeting revenue growth 2-3x higher than GDP growth. The exact 2025 target will be disclosed at the next analyst meeting.
- Growth will be more towards volume and intensity. Hospitals in Bangkok will focus on intensity growth, while upcountry hospitals will see growth more from volume. Price increases will align with medical inflation at 2-3%.
- Margins are expected to improve in 2025, supported by revenue growth and stronger cost controls.
- Management view co-pay insurance policies to have a limited impact due to: i) currently, not all product will transition to Co-pay but only individual policies with excessive claims (over three simple disease claims or total claims exceeding 300% of premiums) — we expect 2% impact to total revenue ii) BDMS services are fairly priced and not involved in overcharging; iii) over the long term, co-pay policies could improve insurance accessibility as premiums decrease, increase insured patients, and boost insurance revenue.
- 4Q24 revenue grew in the low-to-mid single digits due to a high base from flu outbreak, but 1Q25E is expected to see stronger growth.
- The expansion plan remains on track, with beds projected to reach 9,300 by 2027, up from c.8,800 in 2024. While expansion is slower compared to the past, the growth in intensity, driven by an aging population, will support continued growth. The capex is set to be 8-10% of sales.
- BDMS aims to grow its market share in the SSO segment, targeting 1m registered members by 2025, up from 920k in 3Q24.
- Management is not concerned about competition in Phuket, confident that demand growth will exceed supply, led by tourists.
- The Silver Wellness Project is still under EIA approval, with construction expected to begin next year and operations tentatively starting in 2030. BDMS is currently in discussions with firms in the property sector to explore potential partnerships.
- The takeaways in-line with our view. We think the market has overreacted on potential Co-pay policies and weak Thai patient revenue in short-term. BDMS is currently valued at attractive valuation of at 22x P/E with div yield>3%.



#### Chularat Hospital (CHG TB, Buy, TP THB3.5)

- CHG expects double-digit revenue growth in 2025, driven by the rampup of hospital performance after capacity expansion and higher Social Security Office (SSO) revenue from the RW>2 rate increase to THB12k/RW.
- Management remains positive on long-term growth, supported by rising healthcare demand from a growing population, particularly working individuals in the eastern region after robust FDI.
- Mae Sot Hospital continues to show strong revenue momentum YoY, QoQ in 4Q24E. It is expected to break even in some quarters of 2025 (vs. loss of THB60-70m in 2024).
- CHG will reverse RW>2 income in 4Q24E under the SSO announcement to pay THB8k/RW. While the exact amount is not yet disclosed, we estimate approximately THB90m.
- The company has THB250m in unrecognized Covid-19 income, which may be booked in 4Q24 to offset the RW>2 impact.
- CHG plans to expand its beds by >600 beds by 2028, representing a 10% CAGR from FY24-28E, in line with our expectations. All beds added in FY24-26E will be in existing hospitals, minimizing cost pressures and ensuring revenue growth.
- CHG terminated its Pattaya management contract in 4Q24, but the impact is expected to be minimal due to its low margin of c.10%.
- Long-term strategy focuses on increasing the proportion of highintensity care and cash patients, which offer higher margins than SSO patients. Most of CHG's new expansions are designed to cater to cashpaying patients.
- The key points align with our view. We view the recent drop in share price as a buying opportunity. Most of the overhang issues have subsided, and we anticipate robust growth next year, driven by the RW>2 rate increases back to THB12k/RW.



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