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<td>3 Dec 19</td>
<td>Hindustan Times</td>
<td>A blueprint for making Ayushman Bharat truly effective on the ground</td>
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A blueprint for making Ayushman Bharat truly effective on the ground

India doesn’t have adequate workforce for health and wellness clinics. Technological innovations can help

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The health and wellness centres (HWCs) under the Ayushman Bharat scheme have the potential to help achieve the Universal Health Coverage goal, but inadequate infrastructure and an insufficiently skilled workforce remain major roadblocks. A new model needs to be developed to manage population health efficiently through both the Ayushman Bharat components, the HWCs and Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY).

The vision for a distress-free and comprehensive wellness system was converted into action on a mission mode last year. Close to 20,000 HWCs are delivering comprehensive primary health care, free of cost, and providing universal prevention, promotion, and ambulatory care at the community-level. Their number is projected to reach at least 1.5 lakh by 2022.

Diagonostics plays a critical role in the prevention and treatment of diseases. From a diagnostic point of view, pathology and simple X-rays are the backbone of health care delivery systems at well-equipped centres, run by trained health care professionals. Ideally, all HWCs should have pathology, radiology, and ultrasound facilities. But there is a huge

and providing a skilled workforce for its operation. For X-ray, the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) should consider tweaking its existing norms on courses for radiographers, without compromising radiation safety for the patient and staff.

Currently, the shortest course takes one year, but paramedics can be trained to perform simple radiography tests at the HWCs in about two to three months. The government should consider training and upskilling paramedics working in the Primary Health Centres (PHCs) to multi-task and perform X-rays in addition to their routine work.

Since an ultrasound is a very important test, it would be possible to house the machine in a mobile van. One doctor, specialising in ultrasonography, can then provide on a one-week service to a dozen HWCs that are geographically close. The van could even be stationed at different centres at given times, depending on the patient load. A mammography machine, too, can be installed in this van to screen the population for breast cancer. Tele-radiology can provide remote diagnosis on X-rays and mammograms generated by these machines, which will make it a viable model for delivering quality services at the grassroots level.

The adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in healthcare is radically changing the face of health care delivery. AI can play a critical role in empowering Ayushman Bharat’s HWCs, as it will enable millions of X-rays conducted by trained radiographers to be read by AI algorithms under a radiologist’s supervision.
gap in terms of human resources in healthcare. This needs to be bridged with skilling, technologies and innovations.

The public-private partnership (PPP) model has been adopted in different states, with varying results. It is evident that the “hub-and-spoke” model can be successful in pathological services, where only the biological samples, such as blood and urine, have to be transported. This model would not work for X-ray and ultrasound as the scans have to be done at the HWC itself.

As per existing laws, only radiologists or MBBS doctors with special training in ultrasonography can perform ultrasound. Given the huge shortage of these specialists, it is not possible to post one specialist in every HWC. Even for performing simple x-ray examinations, there is a severe dearth of trained radiographers.

Innovative solutions can help bridge the vast gap between equipping these HWCs with basic radiological diagnostic facilities and start-ups need to work closely with private and public hospitals and research institutes to quickly bring AI algorithms into clinical use. The government must facilitate such partnerships.

Mahajan Imaging (full disclosure: I am the founder of Mahajan Imaging), for example, is paving the way for a new deployment strategy of AI in radiology at its Centre for Advanced Research in Imaging, Neuroscience and Genomics (CARING). Using the new AI Deployment Platform, CARPEL, we validate the accuracy of AI algorithms from different parts of the world, including India, to demonstrate a comparison between reports auto-generated by a deep-learning algorithm and a practising radiologist. The findings have been validated and published in scientific journals and presented at international conferences.

Nothing happens in isolation, and therefore, a holistic approach towards universal health coverage is needed. India has many unique challenges and the solutions for these will also ultimately come from within the country. Since a skilled workforce for HWCs will be a continuing challenge as we scale up, the health care sector must quickly adapt to address it through technological interventions and innovations.

Dr Harsh Mahajan is vice president, NATHEALTH, and former national president of the Indian Radiological and Imaging Association. The views expressed are personal.
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NEW DELHI: Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) on Thursday urged the government to bring in zero-rating GST for healthcare services and making it a priority sector to meet its long-term funding and financing requirements. In its pre-Budget recommendations, the apex industry body also called for building capacity in tier-II and III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well. The industry expects that “the Union Budget 2020-21 will be announced keeping in focus the incentives for medical value tourism, zero-rating GST on healthcare services and health insurance premiums”, NATHEALTH said.
Govt moves to offer quality diagnostic services under PMJAY

The ministry of health and family welfare is exploring options to provide quality diagnostic services from certified laboratories to beneficiaries of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).

Towards this end, the government plans to evaluate models for partnering with diagnostic companies which can provide such services.

The government has already announced the establishment of 190,000 health and wellness centres under AB-PMJAY, which will also offer diagnostic services. The NITI Aayog has called for making these centres operational by 2022-23 to ensure sufficient coverage and to provide the healthcare needs of secondary and tertiary care.

A government analysis of the geographical presence of laboratories and sample collection centres of three of the largest organised chain players in the private sector revealed that more than half of the districts identified by NITI Aayog as aspirational districts and lacking in terms of basic infrastructure are being served by one of these three players.

"As under-served areas in India need special attention, the government is looking at the private sector's support, under the public private partnership mode, for building infrastructure, improving diagnostic services and ensuring availability of skilled doctors and health professionals in Tier II and III cities," said Indu Bhushan, chief executive officer, AB-PMJAY and National Health Authority (NHA). "NITI Aayog and NHA are working together to provide financial incentives and encourage private equity investment to improve quality of services and supply in Tier II and III cities," he said.

The Indian medical diagnostic industry will play a vital role in the prevention and wellness, which is the foundation of Ayushman Bharat, with 40% of the expenditure on primary healthcare being on diagnostics, according to the Union health ministry.

"We have also asked the diagnostic industry to directly engage with states and expand in radiology, which would not only help Ayushman Bharat but also other government schemes," said Vinod Paul, member (health), NITI Aayog.

Sub-health centres and primary health centres are being strengthened as health and wellness centres (HWCs) to expand access to comprehensive primary health care under Ayushman Bharat.

The HWCs will also provide preventive, promotive, rehabilitative, and curative care for an expanded range of services including reproductive and child health services. The private health sector including the diagnostic industry always prioritises care for profit, but the government always has a different priority to provide affordable health-care to all. We are working with the government on models that will provide quality diagnostics at an affordable cost," said Harsukh Mahajan, founder, Mahajan Imaging Centre and vice-president, Healthcare Federation of India.

The diagnostic industry is in conversation with the government to sort out challenges arising from rising costs. A report titled ‘An Assessment of India’s Laboratory Diagnostic Industry’ released by the Healthcare Federation of India on Thursday said the industry suffers from limited focus on quality standards and cost pressures driven by high custom duty and goods and services tax (GST) structure.
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**NATHEALTH on GST on healthcare**

The Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) on Thursday urged the government for bringing in zero-rating GST for healthcare services and making it a priority sector to meet its long-term funding and financing requirements. In its pre-Budget recommendations, it also called for building capacity in Tier-II and III cities.
4 Dec 19 | The Asian Age | 2-day Summit on healthcare Held | 1 | New Delhi | 77991

**2-day summit on healthcare held**

New Delhi: A two-day annual summit on “Reimagining Collaboration to Strengthen India’s Healthcare Growth Trajectory”, organised by the Healthcare Federation of India – NATHEALTH – emphasized on how the corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds could be used to push the critical segments like preventive health, skilling and digital technologies.

NATHEALTH chairman Sudarshan Ballal said that the government and the industry need to work together to realise the Prime Minister’s vision of “Health for All.” NATHEALTH vice-chairperson Preetha Reddy said: “The healthcare sector needs more investments and we can set up a healthcare investment promotion bureau.”
NATHEALTH in partnership for health for all in India

NEW DELHI, DEC 1

HEALTHCARE Federation of India - NATHEALTH - two-day 6th Annual Summit on 'Reimaging Collaboration to Strengthen India's Healthcare Growth Trajectory', which kicked off here today.

Dr. Vinod Paul, Honorary Member (Health), NITI Aayog, Chief Guest of the event, presented the inaugural address and Dr. India Bharath, CEO, National Health Authority was the keynote speaker at the event.

On day 1 of the Annual Summit, NATHEALTH announced support of distinguished industry bodies CII, Association of Healthcare Providers (India), FICCI, Indian Chambers of Commerce (ICC), ASSOCHAM and FICCI Chamber of Commerce.

Dr. Sudarshan Reddy, President NATHEALTH & Chairman, Manipal Health Enterprises Pvt. Ltd., also presented a five-point agenda which included galvanizing NATHEALTH resident knowledge and expertise to provide innovative solutions, mobilising partners from India and outside, informing & shaping healthcare policies and government regulations to serve diverse stakeholders, Advancing the cause of Healthcare sector participants via sustained communication and education campaigns and catalyze innovation in Healthcare by bringing industry and private sector, experience and resources together and mentor startups.

Preetha Reddy, Senior Vice President, NATHEALTH & Executive Vice Chairperson, Apollo Hospitals Group emphasised on the need for a World-class Brand India for Healthcare. She emphasized, “The importance for building trust between investors, policymakers and people seeking care whether from India or from outside cannot be undermined. The Indian Healthcare sector needs more investments and we can set up a Health care investment promotion bureau as a FII.”
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नव राष्ट्र

हेलथकेअर फेरेड्रेशनतर्फ 6 वे वार्षिक समेलन

पुणे : भारतातील हेलथकेअर फेरेड्रेशनतर्फऱे 'डिमेजिनिंग कोर्लबेरशन रू स्ट्रेंट इंडियाज हेलथकेअर ग्रॉथ ट्रॉजेक्टरी' विषयावरील दोन-दिवसीय 6 वे वार्षिक समेलन आज सुरु होताय. समस्त हेलथकेअर क्षेत्रातच आवाज एका मंचावर आणून एक महत्वाच्य पत्थर खाळी गाढला. या समारोहाचे प्रमुख पाहुणे डॉ. विनोद पॉल्याच्या हस्ते समेलनाचे उद्घाटन होते. डॉ. इंदु भूषण उपस्थित होते.

हेलथकेअर फेरेड्रेशनने सरकारला एक नवेदन सादर केले. ज्यामध्ये सुधारकोणच्या अशा कल्पना मार्गदर्श तयार, ज्याच्यात आयुष्मान भारत, गुंतवणूक आणि गुणवत्ता, कौशल्य आणि हेलथकेअर इमोडेशन या संबंधीच्या शक्यता खुल्या करण्याची क्षमता होती. या समेलनात भारताच्या हेलथकेअर विकासपथाच्या सशक्त करण्यासाठी सहयोगात्मक पुनर्विचार करण्यास्तव कंपन्या, निर्णायकतेचे, क्षेत्रातील तज्ज्ञ आणि शिक्षणतज्ज्ञ एकत्र
The Hans India

Sunrise Sector To See Growth With Increase in Exports

Pharma industry will become the largest supplier in volume by exports to large and traditionally under penetrated markets

Alay Tyagi & Munish Shekhawat

The Indian Pharmaceutical industry is a sunrise industry with a competitive advantage for India. We should leverage India’s position by unleashing entrepreneurial spirit through policy stability and ecosystem, Secretary General, IPA

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Publication: The Hans India
Headline: Sunrise Sector To See Growth With Increase in Exports
Page Number: 5
Edition: Hyderabad
Circulation: 97623

“...”

...said, “I believe, in 2020 and onwards, the main differentiator would be patient care and service. Healthcare institutions would be focusing on all the key touchpoints of the patient journey. Highlighting the priorities, Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) President Suresh Ballal said that in 2020, ‘Health for Healthcare’ would be the main mantra for all stakeholders including policymakers and regulators.”

“Balancing sustainability, improving quality, and value creation would be the top priorities for the sector. There is a need for quality healthcare to be delivered to everyone in India, hence incentivizing capacity building in Tier II and III cities would get a long way in achieving the goal of universal healthcare,” he added.

Healthcare in India is on the cusp of significant transformation -- demographic, regulatory, technological and financial -- Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) President A Vaidh-\.en said.

Indian government’s thrust on universal healthcare through Ayushman Bharat and an estimated 140 million households expected to enter the middle class in the next decade, not only focuses on the consumption of healthcare services but also an impact on healthcare demand and a significant uptake of patient volumes, he added.

While it seems all hunky-dory, medical device manufacturers want issues affecting them to be addressed satisfactorily. Medical devices makers’ body, Advamed Vice President Abhi Pratt said it would urge the government to promote the adoption of global harmonisation, including internationally recognised standards, that would not only help ensure the quality and efficacy of products but also enable the ecosystem for manufacturing, research, and innovation for better quality of patients in India.
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Minimum Quality Requirements, Ease of Custom Duty & Extension of Input Tax Credits for GST in Healthcare: NATHEALTH Lab Diagnostic Study

NATHEALTH Study, Released By Dr Vinod Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog, highlights the challenges and opportunities in the Lab Diagnostic segment which is an important pivot to India’s response to the twin challenges of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

The Indian Diagnostic industry plays a critical role in the achievement of the vision of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The industry, however, suffers from a limited focus on quality standards and cost pressures driven by high custom duty and the Goods and Services Tax (GST) structure, reveals a Diagnostic Study, released by Healthcare Federation of India-NATHEALTH.

“Going forward, the government and industry should come together and efforts should be made towards laying down minimum quality requirements, easing of custom duty and extending input tax credits for GST,” highlights NATHEALTH Diagnostic Study that was released Dr Vinod Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog during the 6th Annual Summit of the Federation, held recently in New Delhi. The study highlights the challenges and opportunities in the diagnostic segment which is an important pivot to India’s response to the twin challenges of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

“The lab diagnostics industry plays a significant role in the care continuum. The growing importance of evidence-based medicine has provided a fillip to the industry. Along with its core objective of diagnosis, the industry offers additional benefits, be it employment generation, availability of specialised tests, improved access, and technological advancements, among others,” the study points out.

Commenting on the findings of the Study, Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH said, “A robust diagnostic ecosystem is critical for the success of schemes like Ayushman Bharat to establish minimum quality requirements, easing of custom duty and extension of input tax credits for the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Such policy measures would support the diagnostic segment to ensure that the benefits of quality diagnostics and wellness can be delivered to the country as a whole.”

The Indian medical diagnostics industry today employs around 8.8 million people with almost 3-4 direct jobs and 3-6 indirect jobs created per new diagnostics establishment, says the Study.

According to the study, the Indian laboratory diagnostics industry, estimated at USD 6 billion, is growing at a healthy rate of 13-14% per annum. With more than 1 lakh labs in India, the industry is highly fragmented and the largest of the organised players have a market share of less than 5%. The industry plays a significant role in the care continuum, be it for diagnosis, prevention, monitoring or treatment.

Today, 70% of medical decisions are based on laboratory results. The industry today is governed by forces of supply and demand, with service quality driving market success.

The value chain in the industry today has three core components – clinical, retail and logistics. Concerning the clinical component, the industry has matured and today offers a comprehensive array of tests at affordable prices. The industry operates at one of the lowest price points in the world. Even at these low rates, the Indian medical diagnostics industry has been able to provide people living in remote areas access to modern diagnostics facilities. The prices have remained flat or at best increased by 5-10% in the last 5 years, while the consumer price index (CPI) price inflation has grown by around 30%. The retail component is highlighted by the doorstep presence of the industry, same-day delivery of lab reports, high customer satisfaction and other
Dr Sudarshan Ballal as the new president of NATHEALTH

Dr Sudarshan Ballal, chairman, Manipal Hospitals, Manipal Health Enterprises Pvt Ltd has been elected as the President of India’s healthcare apex body- NATHEALTH. He succeeded Daljit Singh, President, Fortis Healthcare Limited.

He has given a new thrust to NATHEALTH and under him many collaborations have been forged.

Raj Gore as CEO-South, Apollo Hospitals

The Apollo Hospitals Group has not been known to recruit senior leaders from outside the organisation. But the appointment of Raj Gore, former Chief Growth officer and Regional COO of Fortis Healthcare, as CEO of South of Apollo Hospitals shattered the tradition and changed that perception. Raj now heads operations across divisions in the southern region, with the key objectives of improving business and implementing programmes to make the organisation future ready. He is responsible for driving operational excellence and profitability across the entire region through business levers and centrally-driven strategic initiatives around business turn around and value proposition enhancement.

Gore is a seasoned professional with almost two decades of experience in business management in North America, Asia and Africa.

Onco.com raises $7 million in Series A funding

Onco.com, India’s only internet aggregator for cancer care, announced completion of $7 million in series A funding by Accel, Chiratae Venture (earlier known as IDG Ventures) and Dream Incubator.

Onco.com is an internet aggregator in healthcare specialising in cancer care. Through its network of world class oncologists, Onco.com provides accurate and personalized scientific advice to cancer patients at every stage of their journey.

Onco.com will utilize the funds to build team, scale operations and expand customer outreach within India and internationally.

Commenting on the Series A funding, Rashie Jain, CEO and Co-founder, Onco.com, said, “We are solving a very critical problem, that of “information gap” that every cancer patient and their family experiences. There are 3 million cancer patients getting treated in India alone and around 7 million cancer patients across Middle-east, Africa and Asia.”
ONLINE
A blueprint for making Ayushman Bharat truly effective on the ground | Opinion

India doesn’t have adequate workforce for health and wellness clinics. Technological innovations can help

The health and wellness centres (HWCs) under the Ayushman Bharat scheme have the potential to help achieve the Universal Health Coverage goal, but inadequate infrastructure and an insufficiently skilled workforce remain major roadblocks. A new model needs to be developed to manage population health efficiently through both the Ayushman Bharat components, the HWCs and Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY).

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2 December 19

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*Dr Harsh Mahajan is vice president, NATHEALTH, and former national president of the Indian Radiological and Imaging Association*

*The views expressed are personal*
As a part of its 6th Annual Summit, NATHEALTH- in association with National Health Authority (NHA), Government of India organised first of its Kind Carnival for Healthcare Startups on 29th November.

The Carnival was an integral part of a high-impact national two-day Annual Summit of NATHEALTH around the themes of Digital Health, Investment, Skilling and Mainstreaming Innovation to drive a stronger healthcare narrative.
The Startup Carnival drew a lot of traction from all stakeholders including innovators, incubators and investors. Nearly 200 Startups and their representatives participated in the event. Welltech was the innovation partner for the Carnival.

Opening the Carnival Dr Indu Bhushan, CEO, NHA said, “We have been witnessing a plethora of healthcare innovations happening across the country and it is crucial to empower them by providing the right support. Our main objective was to showcase an enabling healthcare innovation ecosystem that supports healthcare innovators and provides them with opportunities to partner and scale.”

“Ambitious scheme like Ayushman Bharat needs the energy and innovation spirit of the young India. I hope startups will provide us the solutions to bridge the current demand-supply gap and ensure quality service to 500+ million people,” he added.

“NATHEALTH and NHA have already agreed to create the future of Indian healthcare through an accelerator program that supports startups to grow and to collaborate better with Government and industry. We aim to provide support to innovation through startups by leveraging our member’s product and technology expertise, global network and capital partners,” said Dr. Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH.

The Carnival aimed at supporting healthcare startups with access to capital & market, industry partnerships, mentorship and technology development assistance. Sessions with mentors and Storytelling along with funding opportunities (B2B Meetings) and exclusive video on the startups were the main highlights of the Carnival. During B2B meetings startups and their representatives explored huge business opportunities as well.

From Startup space, Health Vectors, Wellthy Therapeutics, PeeSafe - Redcliffe Hygiene Private Limited, Cyclops Medtech, OncoStem Diagnostics Pvt. Ltd, Kvatay Medical Pvt. Ltd., Doxor, IMPACT GURU, CARING (Mahajan Imaging), NanoHealth, niroggyan, Akna Medical, Medikabazaar, VVP Healthcare, Erfolgifiences, Stay Happl, Sanskritech Smart Solutions, Incredible Devices, InnAccel, BeatO (Health ARX Technologies), HealthCubed, Zipline International, NIRA-MI Health Analytix, Meddo among others showcased their products and services at the kiosks at the carnival which also opened engagement gateways amongst academia, start-up incubators and accelerators, private industry and investors.

Amit Mookim, Managing Director, IQVIA South Asia, who is also the leader for the NATHEALTH Innovation and Entrepreneurship Track said, “Entrepreneurship and a vibrant startup ecosystem is an absolute necessity to compete with the circle of innovation in healthcare. The NATHEALTH- NHA initiative is a great step in that direction and one of the several value-adding initiatives of NATHEALTH to Indian and global healthcare.”

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NHA-NATHEALTH Hosts Innovation Carnival for Healthcare Startups

The Carnival showcased an enabling healthcare innovation ecosystem that supports healthcare innovators and provides them with opportunities to partner and scale.

Dr. Indu Bhushan, CEO, NHA and Dr. Sudanshan Bajaj, President, NATEALTH inaugurating NHA-NATHEALTH Startup Carnival in New Delhi on Friday.

As a part of its 6th Annual Summit, Apex Healthcare Industry body, NATHEALTH, in association with National Health Authority (NHA), Government of India organised first of its kind Carnival for Healthcare Startups here today. The Carnival was an integral part of a high-impact national two-day Annual Summit of NATHEALTH around the themes of Digital Health, Investment, Skilling and Mainstreaming Innovation to drive a stronger healthcare narrative.
The Startup Carnival drew a lot of traction from all stakeholders including innovators, incubators and investors. Nearly 200 Startups and their representatives participated in the event. Welltech was the innovation partner for the Carnival.

Opening the Carnival Dr InduBhushan, CEO, NHA, said, "We have been witnessing a plethora of healthcare innovations happening across the country and it is crucial to empower them by providing the right support. Our main objective was to showcase an enabling healthcare innovation ecosystem that supports healthcare innovators and provides them with opportunities to partner and scale."

"Ambitious scheme like Ayushman Bharat needs the energy and innovation spirit of young India. I hope startups will provide us with the solutions to bridge the current demand-supply gap and ensure quality service to 500+ million people," he added.

"NATHEALTH and NHA have already agreed to create the future of Indian healthcare through an accelerator program that supports startups to grow and to collaborate better with Government and industry. We aim to provide support to innovation through startups by leveraging our member’s product and technology expertise, global network and capital partners," said Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH.

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A blueprint for making Ayushman Bharat truly effective on the ground

India doesn’t have adequate workforce for health and wellness clinics. Technological innovations can help

The health and wellness centres (HWCs) under the Ayushman Bharat scheme have the potential to help achieve the Universal Health Coverage goal, but inadequate infrastructure and an insufficiently skilled workforce remain major roadblocks. A new model needs to be developed to manage population health efficiently through both the Ayushman Bharat components, the HWCs and Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY).

The vision for a distress-free and comprehensive wellness system was converted into action on a mission mode last year. Close to 20,000 HWCs are delivering comprehensive primary health care free of cost, and providing universal prevention, promotion, and ambulatory care at the community-level. Their number is projected to reach at least 1.5 lakh by 2022.

Diagnostics plays a critical role in the prevention and treatment of diseases. From a diagnostic point of view, pathology and simple X-rays are the backbone of health care delivery systems at well-equipped centres, run by trained health care professionals. Ideally, all HWCs should have pathology, radiology, and ultrasound facilities. But there is a huge gap in terms of human resources in health care. This needs to be bridged with skillful, technologies and innovation.

The public-private partnership (PPP) model has been adopted in different states, with varying results. It is evident that the “hub-and-spoke” model can be successful in pathological services, where only the biological samples, such as blood and urine, have to be transported. This model would not work for X-ray and ultrasound as the scans have to be done at the HWC itself.

As per existing laws, only radiologists or MBBS doctors with special training in ultrasonography can perform ultrasound. Given the huge shortage of these specialists, it is not possible to post one specialist in every HWC. Even for performing simple x-ray examinations, there is a severe dearth of trained innovative solutions can help bridge the vast gap between equipping these HWCs with basic radiological diagnostic facilities and providing a skilled workforce for its operation. For X-ray, the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) should consider tweaking its existing norms on courses for radiographers, without compromising radiation safety for the users. Currently, the shortest course takes one year, but paramedics can be trained to perform simple radiography tests at the HWCs in about two to three months. The government should consider training and upskilling paramedics working in the Primary Health Centres (PHCs) to multi-task and perform X-rays in addition to their routine work. Since an ultrasound is a very important basic test, it would be possible to house the machine in a mobile van. One doctor, specialising in ultrasonography, can then provide once-a-week service to a dozen HWCs that are geographically close. The van could even be stationed at different centres at given times, depending on the patient load. A mammography machine, too, can be installed in this van to screen the population for breast cancer. Tele-radiology can provide remote diagnosis on X-rays and mammograms generated by these machines, which will make it a viable model for delivering quality services at the ground level.

The adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in health care is radically changing the face of health care delivery. AI can play a critical role in empowering Ayushman Bharat’s HWCs, as it will enable millions of X-rays conducted by trained radiographers to be read by AI algorithms under a radiologist’s supervision.

Innovators and start-ups need to work closely with private and public hospitals and research institutes to quickly bring AI algorithms into clinical use. The government must facilitate such partnerships.

Mahajan Imaging (full disclosure: I am the founder of Mahajan Imaging), for example, is paving the way for a new deployment strategy of AI in radiology at its Centre for Advanced Research in Imaging, Neuroscience and Genomics (CARING). Using the new AI Deployment Platform, CARPEL, we validate the accuracy of AI algorithms from different parts of the world, including India, to demonstrate a comparison between reports auto-generated by a deep-learning algorithm and a practising radiologist. The findings have been validated and published in scientific journals.
Medical Dialogues
...Voice of the Medical Profession

NHA-NATHEALTH Startup Carnival showcases amazing innovations

Latest Health News, Organization
Published on December 3, 2019 | Last Updated on December 3, 2019

New Delhi: As a part of its 6th Annual Summit, Apex Healthcare Industry body-NATHEALTH in association with National Health Authority (NHA), Government of India organised first of its Kind Carnival for Healthcare Startups here.

The Carnival was an integral part of a high-impact national two-day Annual Summit of NATHEALTH around the themes of Digital Health, Investment, Skilling and Mainstreaming Innovation to drive a stronger healthcare narrative. The Carnival showcased amazing innovations that can radically transform the way healthcare is delivered in India.

The Startup Carnival drew a lot of traction from all stakeholders including innovators, incubators and investors. Nearly 200 Startups and their representatives participated in the event. Welltech was the innovation partner for the Carnival.

Opening the Carnival, Dr Indu Bhushan, CEO, NHA, said, “We have been witnessing a plethora of healthcare innovations happening across the country and it is crucial to empower them by providing the right support. Our main objective was to showcase an enabling healthcare innovation ecosystem that supports healthcare innovators and provides them with opportunities to partner and scale.”

“Ambitious scheme like Ayushman Bharat needs the energy and innovation spirit of young India. I hope startups will provide us the solutions to bridge the current demand-supply gap and ensure quality service to 500+ million people,” he added.
“NATHEALTH and NHA have already agreed to create the future of Indian healthcare through an accelerator program that supports startups to grow and to collaborate better with Government and industry. We aim to provide support to innovation through startups by leveraging our member’s product and technology expertise, global network and capital partners,” said Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH.

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“Entrepreneurship and a vibrant startup ecosystem is an absolute necessity to compete with the circle of innovation in healthcare. The NATHEALTH-NHA initiative is a great step in that direction and one of the several value-adding initiatives of NATHEALTH to Indian and global healthcare,” said Amit Mookim, Managing Director, IQVIA South Asia, who is also the leader for the NATHEALTH Innovation and Entrepreneurship Track.

Startups need guidance on the evolving ecosystem. During the day-long Carnival, they were made aware of policy reforms, incentives, incubation prospects, and industry linkages. It also provided students and researchers from various tech Institutes an insight into the evolving startup ecosystem.

Earlier on Day 1 of the Summit, Dr. Vinod Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog delivered the keynote address and also release NATHEALTH Diagnostic Study that that highlights the challenges and opportunities in the diagnostic segment which is an important pivot to India’s response to the twin challenges of communicable and non-communicable diseases.
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During the Summit, NATHEALTH also announced the support of notable industry bodies CII, Association of Healthcare Providers (India), FICCI, Indian Chambers of Commerce (ICC), ASSOCHAM, PHD Chamber of Commerce, all of whom share a common vision for better, high quality and affordable healthcare in India.

**Read Also:** National Health Authority and NATHEALTH Sign MOU to drive innovations in healthcare sector

### Author Details

**Medical Dialogues Bureau**

Medical Dialogues Bureau consists of a team of passionate medical/scientific writers, led by doctors and healthcare researchers. Our team efforts to bring you updated and timely news about the important happenings of the medical and healthcare sector. Our editorial team can be reached at editorial@medicaldialogues.in. Check out more about our bureau/team [here](https://medicaldialogues.in/nha-nathealth-startup-carnival-showcases-amazing-innovations/)
NATHEALTH partners with NHA to strengthen healthcare startups

The first-of-its-kind innovation carnival aimed at supporting healthcare startups with access to capital and market, industry partnerships, mentorship and technology development assistance.

December 03, 2019, 15:32 IST

The innovation carnival focused on digital health, investment, imparting skills and mainstreaming innovation, which was organised by NATHEALTH in association with NHA (National Health Authority) as a part of its 6th annual summit.

Nearly 200 startups and their representatives participated in the event which showcased an enabling healthcare innovation ecosystem that supports healthcare innovators and provides them with opportunities to partner and scale.

Commencing the carnival, Dr InduBhushan, CEO, NHA, said, “We have been witnessing a plethora of healthcare innovations happening across the country and it is crucial to empower them by providing the right support. Our main objective was to illustrate an enabling healthcare innovation ecosystem that supports healthcare innovators and provides them with opportunities to partner and scale.”

Speaking about the initiative Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President of NATHEALTH, said, “NATHEALTH and NHA have already agreed to create the future of Indian healthcare through an accelerator program that supports startups to grow and to collaborate better with government and industry. We aim to provide support to innovation through startups by leveraging our member’s product and technology expertise, global network and capital partners”.

Highlighting about the vibrant startup ecosystem, Amit Mookim, Managing Director, IQVIA South Asia, said, “Entrepreneurship and a vibrant startup ecosystem is an absolute necessity to compete with the circle of innovation in healthcare. The NATHEALTH-NHA initiative is a step in the right direction and one of the several value-adding initiatives of NATHEALTH to Indian and global healthcare”.

The carnival also witnessed deliberations on policy reforms, incubation prospects and industry linkages. Sessions with mentors, funding opportunities and exclusive video on the startups were also presented.

The startups which participated in the carnival included Startup space, Health Vectors, Wellthy Therapeutics, PeeSafe - Redcliffe Hygiene Private Limited, Cyclops Medtech, OncoStem Diagnostics Pvt. Ltd, Kvayat Medical Pvt. Ltd., Doxper, IMPACT GURU, CARING (Mahajan Imaging), NanoHealth, niroggyan, Akna Medical, Medikabazaar, VVP Healthcare, Erfolglifesciences, Stay Happi, Sanskritech Smart Solutions, Incredible Devices, InnAccele, BeatO (Health ARX Technologies), HealthCubed, Zipline International, NIRAMAI Health Analytix, Meddo among others demonstrated their products and services at the kiosks.

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**Minimum Quality Requirements, Ease of Custom Duty & Extension of Input Tax Credits for GST in Healthcare: NATHEALTH Lab Diagnostic Study**

By Neeraj Vats / 56 mins ago / News Update / No Comments

**NATHEALTH**

Healthcare Federation of India

**NATHEALTH Study**, released by Dr Vinod Paul, Member(Health), NITI Aayog, highlights the challenges and opportunities in the Lab Diagnostic segment which is an important pivot to India’s response to the twin challenges of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

The Indian Diagnostic industry plays a critical role in the achievement of the vision of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The industry, however, suffers from a limited focus on quality standards and cost pressures driven by high custom duty and the Goods and Services Tax (GST) structure, reveals a Diagnostic Study, released by Healthcare Federation of India-NATHEALTH.

“Going forward, the government and industry should come together and efforts should be made towards laying down minimum quality requirements, easing of custom duty and extending input tax credits for GST,” highlights NATHEALTH Diagnostic Study that was released Dr Vinod Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog during the 6th Annual Summit of the Federation, held recently in New Delhi. The study highlights the challenges and opportunities in the diagnostic segment which is an important pivot to India’s response to the twin challenges of communicable and non-communicable diseases.
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“The lab diagnostics industry plays a significant role in the care continuum. The growing importance of evidence-based medicine has provided a fillip to the industry. Along with its core objective of diagnosis, the industry offers additional benefits, be it employment generation, availability of specialised tests, improved access, and technological advancements, among others,” the study points out.

Commenting on the findings of the Study, **Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH** said, “A robust diagnostic ecosystem is critical for the success of schemes like Ayushman Bharat to establish minimum quality requirements, easing of custom duty and extension of input tax credits for the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Such policy measures would support the diagnostic segment to ensure that the benefits of quality diagnostics and wellness can be delivered to the country as a whole.”

The Indian medical diagnostics industry today employs around 0.8 million people with almost 3–4 direct jobs and 3–6 indirect jobs created per new diagnostics establishment, says the Study.

According to the study, the Indian laboratory diagnostics industry, estimated at USD 6 billion, is growing at a healthy rate of 13–14% per annum. With more than 1 lakh labs in India, the industry is highly fragmented and the largest of the organised players have a market share of less than 5%. The industry plays a significant role in the care continuum, be it for diagnosis, prevention, monitoring or treatment. Today, 70% of medical decisions are based on laboratory results. The industry today is governed by forces of supply and demand, with service quality driving market success.

The value chain in the industry today has three core components – clinical, retail and logistics. Concerning the clinical component, the industry has matured and today offers a comprehensive array of tests at affordable prices. The industry operates at one of the lowest price points in the world. Even at these low rates, the Indian medical diagnostics industry has been able to provide people living in remote
remained flat or at best increased by 5–10% in the last 5 years, while the consumer price index (CPI) price inflation has grown by around 30%. The retail component is highlighted by the doorstep presence of the industry, same-day delivery of lab reports, high customer satisfaction and other advances made in making the whole experience a relatively pleasant one. The last component, logistics, is highlighted in the processes deployed by labs to collect samples from collection centres and transfer them to the central lab for processing.

These three components have transformed the industry into a service industry, with retail and logistics component accounting for more than 50% of the costs. This has enabled access to modern diagnostics in more than 50% of the aspirational districts of the country.

“The study has assessed India’s Laboratory Diagnostic Industry and highlights the role played by the Industry in improving Indian Healthcare in terms of Accessibility, Affordability, and Accountability. The industry has created social capital in the form of nearly 8 lakh jobs and skilling opportunities. We, at NATHEALTH, are committed to partner with the government to achieve the SDG 2030,” commented Siddhartha Bhattacharya, Secretary General, NATHEALTH.

The launch of Ayushman Bharat is a significant step towards achieving the goal of UHC. The lab diagnostics industry would need to play a key role in the realisation of this goal.

“Wellness centres are an important pillar for Ayushman Bharat, with the government aiming to set up 1.5 lakh such centres across the country. NITI Aayog has called for making these centres operational by 2022–23 to ensure sufficient coverage and lower the burden on secondary and tertiary care. The diagnostics industry will play a critical role in making this a reality while working closely with the government,” the study emphasises.

Given the right impetus, the industry can play an important role in the health and economic well-being of the country by:
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5 December 19


NHA-NATHEALTH hosts first of its kind Innovation Carnival for Healthcare Startups

Ambitious scheme like Ayushman Bharat needs the energy and innovation spirit of the young India: Dr Indu Bhushan, CEO, NHA

* ‘Entrepreneurship and a vibrant startup ecosystem is an absolute necessity to compete with the circle of innovation in healthcare’

* The Carnival showcased an enabling healthcare innovation ecosystem that supports healthcare innovators and provides them with opportunities to partner and scale

* Over 200 delegates and start-ups participated
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About National Health Authority

National Health Authority (NHA) is an independent autonomous body responsible for the implementation of PM-JAY across the country. It is headed by a full-time Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and governed by a Governing Board chaired by the Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare.

About NATHEALTH

NATHEALTH has been created with the Vision to “Be the credible and unified voice in improving access and quality of healthcare”. Leading Healthcare Service Providers, Medical Technology Providers (Devices, Equipment & IT), Diagnostic Service Providers, Health Insurance companies, Health Education Institutions, Medical Journalism companies, Biotech/Lifesciences related companies, Healthcare Publishers, Healthcare Consultants, Home Healthcare companies, PE & VC companies and other stakeholders have come together to build NATHEALTH as a common platform to create the next level of momentum in Indian Healthcare. NATHEALTH is an inclusive Institution that has representation of small & medium hospitals and nursing homes as well as Healthcare Start-up companies. NATHEALTH is committed to work on its Mission to encourage innovation, help bridge the skill and capacity gap, help shape policy & regulations and enable the environment to fund long term growth. NATHEALTH aims to help build a better and healthier future for both rural and urban India.
NATHEALTH Diagnostic Study was recently released by Dr Vinod Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog during the 6th Annual Summit of the Federation.

The report highlights the challenges and opportunities in the Lab Diagnostic segment which is an important pivot to India’s response to the twin challenges of communicable and non-communicable diseases.
The Indian diagnostic industry plays a critical role in the achievement of the vision of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The industry, however, suffers from a limited focus on quality standards and cost pressures driven by high custom duty and the Goods and Services Tax (GST) structure, reveals a Diagnostic Study, released by Healthcare Federation of India, NATHEALTH.

The report highlights, “Going forward, the government and industry should come together and efforts should be made towards laying down minimum quality requirements, easing of custom duty and extending input tax credits for GST.”

“The lab diagnostics industry plays a significant role in the care continuum. The growing importance of evidence-based medicine has provided a fillip to the industry. Along with its core objective of diagnosis, the industry offers additional benefits, be it employment generation, availability of specialised tests, improved access, and technological advancements, among others,” the study points out.

Commenting on the findings of the Study, Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH said, “A robust diagnostic ecosystem is critical for the success of schemes like Ayushman Bharat to establish minimum quality requirements, easing of custom duty and extension of input tax credits for the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Such policy measures would support the diagnostic segment to ensure that the benefits of quality diagnostics and wellness can be delivered to the country as a whole.”

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Siddhartha Bhattacharya, Secretary General, NATHEALTH commented, “The Study has assessed India's Laboratory Diagnostic Industry and highlights the role played by the Industry in improving Indian Healthcare in terms of Accessibility, Affordability, and Accountability. The industry has created social capital in the form of nearly 8 lakh jobs and skilling opportunities. We, at NATHEALTH, are committed to partner with the government to achieve the SDG 2030.”

The launch of Ayushman Bharat is a significant step towards achieving the goal of UHC. The lab diagnostics industry would need to play a key role in the realisation of this goal.

"Wellness centres are an important pillar for Ayushman Bharat, with the government aiming to set up 1.5 lakh such centres across the country. NITI Aayog has called for making these centres operational by 2022–23 to ensure sufficient coverage and lower the burden on secondary and tertiary care. The diagnostics industry will play a critical role in making this a reality while working closely with the government," the study emphasises.

Given the right impetus, the industry can play an important role in the health and economic well-being of the country by:

- Creating Job opportunities
- Increasing access to diagnostics
- Becoming a diagnostics centre of excellence in the region
- Providing entrepreneurship opportunities
- Advanced personalised test menu Increase trained and highly skilled manpower
- Ensuring the success of Ayushman Bharat
Diagnostic industry has limited focus on quality: Study

BS RAWAT

NEW DELHI: A Healthcare Federation of India-NATHEALTH study, released by Dr Vinod Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog, has highlighted the challenges and opportunities in the Lab Diagnostic segment which is an important pivot in India’s response to the twin challenges of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

The Indian Diagnostic industry suffers from a limited focus on quality standards and cost pressures driven by high custom duty and the GST structure, reveals the study.

The study highlights that the government and industry should come together and efforts should be made towards laying down minimum quality requirements, easing of customs duty and extending input tax credit for GST.

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Govt moves to offer quality diagnostic services under PMJAY

2 min read. Updated: 10 Dec 2019, 11:09 PM IST

Neetu Chandra Sharma

- Govt plans to evaluate models for partnering with firms which provide such diagnostic services
- The Indian medical diagnostic industry will play a vital role in prevention and wellness, govt said

NEW DELHI: The ministry of health and family welfare is exploring options to provide quality diagnostic services from certified laboratories to beneficiaries of the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).
Towards this end, the government plans to evaluate models for partnering with diagnostic companies which can provide such services.

The government has already announced the establishment of 150,000 health and wellness centres under AB-PMJAY, which will also offer diagnostic services. The NITI Aayog has called for making these centres operational by 2022–23 to ensure sufficient coverage and to lower the burden on secondary and tertiary care.

A government analysis of the geographical presence of laboratories and sample collection centres of three of the largest organized chain players in the private sector reveals that more than half of the districts identified by NITI Aayog as aspirational districts and lacking the most in terms of basic infrastructure are being served by one of these three players.

“As underserved areas in India need special attention, the government is seeking the private sector’s support, under the public private partnership mode, for building infrastructure, improving diagnostics services, and ensuring availability of skilled doctors and health professionals in Tier II and III cities,” said Indu Bhushan, chief executive officer, AB-PMJAY and National Health Authority (NHA). “NITI Aayog and NHA are working together to provide financial incentives and encourage private equity investment to improve quality of services and supply in tier-II and III cities,” he said.

The Indian medical diagnostic industry will play a vital role in prevention and wellness, which is the foundation of Ayushman Bharat, with 41% of the expenditure on primary healthcare being on diagnostics, according to the Union health ministry.
“We have also asked the diagnostic industry to directly engage with states for expanding teleradiology, which would not only help Ayushman Bharat but also other government schemes,” said Vinod Paul, member (health), NITI Aayog.

Sub health centres and primary health centres are being strengthened as health and wellness centres (HWCs), to expand access to comprehensive primary health care under Ayushman Bharat. The HWCs will also provide preventive, promotive, rehabilitative, and curative care for an expanded range of services including reproductive and child health services. “The private health sector including the diagnostic industry always primarily looks for profits, but the government always has a different priority to provide affordable healthcare to all. We are working with the government on models that will provide quality diagnostics at an affordable cost,” said Harsh Mahajan, founder, Mahajan Imaging Centre and vice-president, Healthcare Federation of India.

The diagnostic industry is in conversation with the government to sort out operational challenges amid rising costs. A report titled *An Assessment of India’s Laboratory Diagnostic Industry* released by the Healthcare Federation of India on Thursday said the industry suffers from limited focus on quality standards and cost pressures driven by high custom duty and the goods and services tax (GST) structure.
There was an Elephant in the Room @ NATHEALTH Summit Inaugural

Healthcare Leaders parried questions of Package Rates & Payment in Ayushman Bharat

December 15, 2019

New Delhi: The mandate of NATHEALTH, Healthcare Federation of India, is to bring voice of private healthcare providers onto one platform and facilitate fair engagement with the government. But where was the voice in NATHEALTH’s Summit last month? Was there any voice at all? There was undeniably an elephant in the room.

Dhananjay Kumar
The most pressing question that is presently stalking private healthcare sector is that of abysmally low package rates of treatments under Ayushman Bharat, globally the biggest govt funded health protection scheme. There is a pressure on private healthcare sector to join the flagship scheme of PM Modi’s government at the centre and make it a success. It was expected that NATHEALTH leaders would forcefully raise this issue in the inaugural in the presence of those Niti Ayog officials who call the shots in the implementation of Ayushman Bharat. But there was palpable reluctance to do the straight talking. Clearly they played to the gallery.

Instead of raising the prickly question, all NATHEALTH leaders and healthcare honchos went gaga over Ayushman Bharat while speaking in the inaugural. They swore by giving full support to govt’s vision of Universal Health coverage. Even in press conference after inaugural, the interlocutors parried the question about private healthcare’s willingness to be part of Ayushman Bharat.

Below the placid facade there was restlessness among healthcare industry leaders who wanted govt officials to be told point blank that unless package rates are satisfactorily addressed and robust effective mechanism for payment is in place, private healthcare will not have the will to join Ayushman Bharat. Many healthcare leaders privately said they do not want money in excess of what govt spends in public hospitals. One of them argued, ‘we only want that the govt asses spend on one bed of a public hospital and fix that much for private hospitals. Just that, nothing more. That will be more than what we bargain for.’

It is given that Ayushman Bharat will not succeed without proactive support of private healthcare sector which was quite obvious from the frantic appeal by Dr Vinod Paul, Niti Ayog member and the architect of Ayushman Bharat. He called upon private sector to adequately join PM Modi’s flagship program and acquiesced it in a sober fact that government alone cannot implement it without the support of Private sector. Of course, Dr Paul gave indication that the govt was in the works to improve the rates but that was far from perking up sentiments of healthcare honchos. He indicated that accredited hospitals rates could be fixed differently.

In the press conference as well, Dr H Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH and Chairman, Manipal Health Enterprizes Private Ltd, Mrs Preethaa Reddy, Senior Vice President, NATHEALTH and Executive Vice chairperson Apollo Hospitals group, Dr Harsh Mahajan, Vice President, NATHEALTH and Founder- Chief Radiologist of Mahajan Imaging and Badri Iyengar, Secretary, NATHEALTH and Managing Director, South Asia-Smith and Nephew Healthcare -
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All spoke in deference to PM Modi’s dreams of Ayushman Bharat and Universal Health Coverage and did not take any aggressive posturing about healthcare industry’s own expectation from the govt.

CAHO (Consortium of accredited Healthcare Organizations) which is coalition of private hospitals that runs programs for creating culture of quality and safety of patient in private hospitals, is taking strident position regarding package rates and inordinate delay in payment and has held that if govt continues to perpetuate the old rates and pressure hospitals to come in to join Ayushman Bharat, quality and patient safety could be casualties and private hospitals might be compelled to cut corners. To a question regarding this, Mrs Preetha Reddy assured there would be no compromise in qualities and said that the govt is seized of the issue of rates and going forward on the matter.

However, in two-day 6th Annual Summit on ‘Reimagining Collaboration to Strengthen India’s Healthcare Growth Trajectory,’ on November 28, the hope was abundantly expressed that digital health might solve the issues of affordability and accessibility. The upshot of the summit was the acceptance that digital health was going to be the future of medicine in India. **Dr Vinod Paul, Honourable Member (Health), NITI Aayog**, Chief Guest of the event presented the Inaugural address and **Dr Indu Bhushan, CEO, National Health Authority** was the keynote speaker at the event. NATHEALTH presented a representation to govt. on key reform ideas that will unlock the potential around Ayushman Bharat, investments and UHC, quality, skilling and healthcare innovation.
Indian diagnostic industry critical in achievement of UHC, SDGs: NATHEALTH Study

According to study, Indian laboratory diagnostics industry, estimated at $6 billion, is growing at of 13–14 per cent per annum

The Indian diagnostic industry plays a critical role in the achievement of the vision of universal health coverage (UHC) as well as the sustainable development goals (SDGs). The industry, however, suffers from a limited focus on quality standards and cost pressures driven by high customs duty and the Goods and Services Tax (GST) structure, reveals a diagnostic study, released by Healthcare Federation of India-NATHEALTH.
“Going forward, the government and industry should come together and efforts should be made towards laying down minimum quality requirements, easing of custom duty and extending input tax credits for GST,” highlights NATHEALTH Diagnostic Study that was released by Dr Vinod Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog during the 6th Annual Summit of the Federation, held recently in New Delhi. The study highlights the challenges and opportunities in the diagnostic segment which is an important pivot to India’s response to the twin challenges of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

“The lab diagnostics industry plays a significant role in the care continuum. The growing importance of evidence-based medicine has provided a fillip to the industry. Along with its core objective of diagnosis, the industry offers additional benefits, be it employment generation, availability of specialised tests, improved access and technological advancements, among others,” the study points out.

Commenting on the findings of the study, Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH said, “A robust diagnostic ecosystem is critical for the success of schemes like Ayushman Bharat to establish minimum quality requirements, easing of custom duty and extension of input tax credits for the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Such policy measures would support the diagnostic segment to ensure that the benefits of quality diagnostics and wellness can be delivered to the country as a whole.”

The Indian medical diagnostics industry today employs around 0.8 million people with almost 3–4 direct jobs and 3–6 indirect jobs created per new diagnostics establishment, says the study.

According to the study, the Indian laboratory diagnostics industry, estimated at $6 billion, is growing at a healthy rate of 13–14 per cent per annum. With more than one lakh labs in India, the industry is highly fragmented and the largest of the organised players have a market share of less than 5 per cent. The industry plays a significant role in the care continuum, be it for diagnosis, prevention, monitoring or treatment. Today, 70 per cent of medical decisions are based on laboratory results. The industry today is governed by forces of supply and demand, with service quality driving market success.

The value chain in the industry today has three core components – clinical, retail and logistics. Concerning the clinical component, the industry has matured and today offers a comprehensive array of tests at affordable prices. The industry operates at one of the lowest price points in the world. Even at these low rates, the Indian medical diagnostics industry has been able to provide people living in remote areas access to modern diagnostics facilities. The prices have remained flat or at best
increased by 5–10 per cent in the last five years, while the consumer price index (CPI) price inflation has grown by around 30 per cent. The retail component is highlighted by the doorstep presence of the industry, same-day delivery of lab reports, high customer satisfaction and other advances made in making the whole experience a relatively pleasant one. The last component, logistics, is highlighted in the processes deployed by labs to collect samples from collection centres and transfer them to the central lab for processing.

These three components have transformed the industry into a service industry, with retail and logistics component accounting for more than 50 per cent of the costs. This has enabled access to modern diagnostics in more than 50 per cent of the aspirational districts of the country.

"The study has assessed India’s Laboratory Diagnostic Industry and highlights the role played by the Industry in improving Indian Healthcare in terms of accessibility, affordability, and accountability. The industry has created social capital in the form of nearly eight lakh jobs and skilling opportunities. We, at NATHEALTH, are committed to partner with the government to achieve the SDG 2030," commented Siddhartha Bhattacharya, Secretary General, NATHEALTH.

The launch of Ayushman Bharat is a significant step towards achieving the goal of UHC. The lab diagnostics industry would need to play a key role in the realisation of this goal.

"Wellness centres are an important pillar for Ayushman Bharat, with the government aiming to set up 1.5 lakh such centres across the country. NITI Aayog has called for making these centres operational by 2022–23 to ensure sufficient coverage and lower the burden on secondary and tertiary care. The diagnostics industry will play a critical role in making this a reality while working closely with the government," the study emphasises.

**Given the right impetus, the industry can play an important role in the health and economic well-being of the country by:**

- Creating job opportunities
- Increasing access to diagnostics
- Becoming a diagnostics centre of excellence in the region
- Providing entrepreneurship opportunities
- Advanced personalised test menu increase trained and highly skilled manpower
- Ensuring the success of Ayushman Bharat
Budget 2020: NATHEALTH urges govt for zero-rating GST on health services

This saving will be passed on to the end consumers and will lower the cost of care, it added

Press Trust of India | New Delhi
Last Updated at December 26, 2019 18:23 IST

The industry expects that “the Union Budget 2020-21 will be announced keeping in focus the incentives for medical value tourism.”
Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) on Thursday urged the government for bringing in zero-rating GST for healthcare services and making it a priority sector to meet its long-term funding and financing requirements.

In its pre-Budget recommendations, the apex industry body also called for building capacity in tier-II and III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well.

The industry expects that “the Union Budget 2020-21 will be announced keeping in focus the incentives for medical value tourism, zero-rating GST on healthcare services and health insurance premiums”, NATHEALTH said.

In a joint memorandum with FICCI, NATHEALTH said rationalisation of GST for healthcare input services would lead to unlocking of the differential input credit and will ease costs for all healthcare providers including nursing homes, clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centres.

This saving will be passed on to the end consumers and will lower the cost of care, it added.

"Since GST is not payable on healthcare services, healthcare service providers are not eligible to avail credit on the input taxes paid by them, which ultimately becomes a cost for the service provider. Under the current GST regime, the net impact of revised tax rates on inputs (goods and services) consumed by hospitals has increased," NATHEALTH President Sudarshan Ballal said.

As this incremental cost is ultimately borne by the patients, it defeats the intention of the government to provide affordable healthcare services, he added.
NATHEALTH recommends Zero-rating GST for healthcare services

December 26, 2019

by Shrutee K/DNS

NATHEALTH recommends GST Relief for Healthcare Sector, cites the increasing pressure on healthcare sector due to slowing investments and need for higher Government Funding Allocations

NATHEALTH recommends the government to make Healthcare a priority sector to meet the long term funding and financing requirements and accelerate its funding commitment to 2.5% GDP as outlined in National Health Policy 2017

Clear CGHS and ECHS arrears immediately and setup a mechanism for regular timely disbursement mechanism for insurance claims

The Government may consider tax holiday period of 15 years for hospitals to spur new investments and cater to supply side expansion in Tier 2/3

Reversal of Custom Duties on Diagnostics and rationalize import tariffs for healthcare products while keeping patient service as top priority

Create Enabling and a Fair and Transparent playing field for Medical technology Products under “Make in India”

Mumbai, December 26th, 2019: As the government prepares to present its Union Budget 2020-21 on February 1, 2020, apex healthcare industry body NATHEALTH, in its pre-budget recommendations, called for building capacity in Tier-II & III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well. On taxation issues, the Apex Healthcare Industry body has recommended two options on Goods and Services Tax (GST). Firstly, NATHEALTH suggested a Zero-rating GST for healthcare services.

“Rationalization of GST for healthcare input services would lead to the unlocking of the differential input credit and will ease costs for all healthcare providers including nursing homes, clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centres. This saving will be passed on to the end consumers and will lower the cost of care,” NATHEALTH said in a joint memorandum with FICCI.
“Since GST is not payable on health care services, health care service providers are not eligible to avail credit on the input taxes paid by it, which ultimately becomes a cost for the service provider. Under the current GST regime, the net impact of revised tax rates on inputs (goods and services) consumed by hospitals has increased. As this incremental cost is ultimately borne by the patients, it defeats the intention of the Government to provide affordable healthcare services,” Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH said in the joint pre-budget memorandum.

“The government needs to provide tax incentives for both existing and new projects. In our pre-budget recommendations also, we have strongly recommended that to spur investment in the sector, the Government could consider a tax holiday period of 15 years for hospitals. The length of the period of exemption needs to be longer, as new hospitals take at-least 5-7 years to start earning returns, after recovering interest and depreciation. For existing projects incentives can be given for 10 years, to support re-investment in capacity and technology upgrades,” he added.

Underlining the importance of capacity building, Mr. Siddhartha Bhattacharya, Secretary-General, NATHEALTH said, “A priority sector status will act as a catalyst for channelizing funds for the sector from financing agencies. Higher investments would ensure quality infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas. Such a move would also ensure that the societal objectives of the Government are adequately met.”

“The harmonized master list of infrastructure sub sectors by the Reserve Bank of India in 2012 includes Healthcare as a priority area for development. However, often these projects are long term based and require adequate funding options which are still not available at a Healthcare provider level. Thus long term funding options with clearly defined gestation period would certainly be a step in the right direction” – he added.

Following are the recommendations and suggestions that the apex healthcare body has put forth for the Government:

Facilitating ease of access to capital, NATHEALTH recommends a dedicated fund for healthcare infrastructure and innovation not only for encouraging entrepreneurship with newer business models but also improve accessibility, availability and quality in Tier 2&3 cities including rural areas.
Emphasizing on the problem of low penetration of health insurance being a major reason behind the rising out-of-pocket spending for healthcare services in India, NATHEALTH recommends the government should undertake additional efforts to make mandatory coverage for all citizens.

NATHEALTH suggests that organized sector employees could be given the option of paying their ESI contribution or purchasing insurance from any IRDA regulated insurance company. Gradually, the focus can be then shifted to the middle and upper middle classes respectively in order to ensure access to preventive and curative care of sufficient quality and safeguards the entire community from financial distress.

The industry rightly expects that the Union Budget 2020-21 will be announced keeping in focus the incentives for medical value tourism, Zero rating GST on healthcare services and health insurance premiums.

Other areas which require efforts include incentivizing capacity building and promotional policies for private providers. These are long standing suggestions from the Industry and are critical to expedite investment in capacity building especially in Tier 2 & 3 cities for the realization of the dream of Universal Healthcare.

About NATHEALTH: NATHEALTH has been created with the Vision to “Be the credible and unified voice in improving access and quality of healthcare”. Leading Healthcare Service Providers, Medical Technology Providers (Devices, Equipment & IT), Diagnostic Service Providers, Health Insurance companies, Health Education Institutions, Medical Journalism companies, Biotech/Life sciences related companies, Healthcare Publishers, Healthcare Consultants, Home Healthcare companies, PE & VC companies and other stakeholders have come together to build NATHEALTH as a common platform to create the next level of momentum in Indian Healthcare. NATHEALTH is an inclusive Institution that has the representation of small & medium hospitals and nursing homes as well as Healthcare Start-up companies. NATHEALTH is committed to work on its mission to encourage innovation, help bridge the skill and capacity gap, help shape policy & regulations and enable the environment to fund long term growth. NATHEALTH aims to help build a better and healthier future for both rural and urban India.
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**NATHEALTH urges govt for zero-rating GST on healthcare services**

**PTI | DEC 26, 2019, 17:24 IST**

New Delhi, Dec 24 () Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) on Thursday urged the government for bringing in zero-rating GST for healthcare services and making it a priority sector to meet its long-term funding and financing requirements. In its pre-Budget recommendations, the apex industry body also called for building capacity in tier-II and III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well.
The industry expects that "the Union Budget 2020-21 will be announced keeping in focus the incentives for medical value tourism, zero-rating GST on healthcare services and health insurance premiums", NATHEALTH said.

In a joint memorandum with FICCI, NATHEALTH said rationalisation of GST for healthcare input services would lead to unlocking of the differential input credit and will ease costs for all healthcare providers including nursing homes, clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centres.

This saving will be passed on to the end consumers and will lower the cost of care, it added.

"Since GST is not payable on healthcare services, healthcare service providers are not eligible to avail credit on the input taxes paid by them, which ultimately becomes a cost for the service provider. Under the current GST regime, the net impact of revised tax rates on inputs (goods and services) consumed by hospitals has increased," NATHEALTH President Sudarshan Ballal said.

As this incremental cost is ultimately borne by the patients, it defeats the intention of the government to provide affordable healthcare services, he added. AKT HRS

(This story has not been edited by Business Insider and is auto-generated from a syndicated feed we subscribe to.)
As the government prepares to present its Union Budget 2020-21 on February 1, 2020, apex healthcare industry body NATHEALTH, in its pre-budget recommendations, called for building capacity in Tier-II & III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well.
On taxation issues, the Apex Healthcare Industry body has recommended two options on Goods and Services Tax (GST). Firstly, NATHEALTH suggested a Zero-rating GST for healthcare services.

“Rationalization of GST for healthcare input services would lead to the unlocking of the differential input credit and will ease costs for all healthcare providers including nursing homes, clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centres. This saving will be passed on to the end consumers and will lower the cost of care,” NATHEALTH said in a joint memorandum with FICCI.

“Since GST is not payable on health care services, health care service providers are not eligible to avail credit on the input taxes paid by it, which ultimately becomes a cost for the service provider. Under the current GST regime, the net impact of revised tax rates on inputs (goods and services) consumed by hospitals has increased. As this incremental cost is ultimately borne by the patients, it defeats the intention of the Government to provide affordable healthcare services,” Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH said in the joint pre-budget memorandum.

“The government needs to provide tax incentives for both existing and new projects. In our pre-budget recommendations also, we have strongly recommended that to spur investment in the sector, the Government could consider a tax holiday period of 15 years for hospitals. The length of the period of exemption needs to be longer, as new hospitals take at-least 5-7 years to start earning returns, after recovering interest and depreciation. For existing projects incentives can be given for 10 years, to support re-investment in capacity and technology upgrades,” he added.

Underlining the importance of capacity building, Siddhartha Bhattacharya, Secretary-General, NATHEALTH said, “A priority sector status will act as a catalyst for channelizing funds for the sector from financing agencies. Higher investments would ensure quality infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas. Such a move would also ensure that the societal objectives of the Government are adequately met.”

“The harmonized master list of infrastructure sub-sectors by the Reserve Bank of India in 2012 includes Healthcare as a priority area for development. However, often these projects are long term based and require adequate funding options which are still not available at a Healthcare provider level. Thus long term funding options with clearly defined gestation period would certainly be a step in the right direction” – he added.

Following are the recommendations and suggestions that the apex healthcare body has put forth for the Government:

1. Facilitating ease of access to capital, NATHEALTH recommends a dedicated fund for healthcare infrastructure and innovation not only for encouraging entrepreneurship with newer
business models but also improve accessibility, availability and quality in Tier 2&3 cities including rural areas.

2. Emphasizing on the problem of low penetration of health insurance is a major reason behind the rising out-of-pocket spending for healthcare services in India, NATHEALTH recommends the government should undertake additional efforts to make mandatory coverage for all citizens.

3. NATHEALTH suggests that organized sector employees could be given the option of paying their ESI contribution or purchasing insurance from any IRDA regulated insurance company. Gradually, the focus can be then shifted to the middle and upper-middle classes respectively in order to ensure access to preventive and curative care of sufficient quality and safeguards the entire community from financial distress.

4. The industry rightly expects that the Union Budget 2020-21 will be announced keeping in focus the incentives for medical value tourism, Zero-rating GST on healthcare services and health insurance premiums.

5. Other areas which require efforts include incentivizing capacity building and promotional policies for private providers. These are long-standing suggestions from the Industry and are critical to expediting investment in the capacity building especially in Tier 2 & 3 cities for the realization of the dream of Universal Healthcare.
NATHEALTH urges govt for zero-rating GST on healthcare services

Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) on Thursday urged the government for bringing in zero-rating GST for healthcare services and making it a priority sector to meet its long-term funding and financing requirements. In its pre-Budget recommendations, the apex industry body also called for building capacity in tier-II and III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well.
The industry expects that "the Union Budget 2020-21 will be announced keeping in focus the incentives for medical value tourism, zero-rating GST on healthcare services and health insurance premiums", NATHEALTH said. In a joint memorandum with FICCI, NATHEALTH said rationalisation of GST for healthcare input services would lead to unlocking of the differential input credit and will ease costs for all healthcare providers including nursing homes, clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centres.

This saving will be passed on to the end consumers and will lower the cost of care, it added. "Since GST is not payable on healthcare services, healthcare service providers are not eligible to avail credit on the input taxes paid by them, which ultimately becomes a cost for the service provider. Under the current GST regime, the net impact of revised tax rates on inputs (goods and services) consumed by hospitals has increased," NATHEALTH President Sudarshan Ballal said.

As this incremental cost is ultimately borne by the patients, it defeats the intention of the government to provide affordable healthcare services, he added.

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NATHEALTH recommends zero GST, tax holiday for healthcare

— December 26, 2019

BS RAWAT
NEW DELHI: As the Indian government prepares to present the Union Budget 2020-21 on February 1, 2020, healthcare industry body NATHEALTH, in its pre-budget recommendations, has called for building capacity in Tier-II & III cities which will cater to the growing demand for quality healthcare in rural areas as well.

NATHEALTH has recommended Zero GST for healthcare services.

“Rationalization of GST for healthcare input services would lead to the unlocking of the differential input credit and will ease costs for all healthcare providers including nursing homes, clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centres. This saving will be passed on to the end consumers and will lower the cost of care,” NATHEALTH has said in a joint memorandum with FICCI.

“Under the current GST regime, the net impact of revised tax rates on inputs consumed by hospitals has increased. As this incremental cost is ultimately borne by the patients, it defeats the intention of the Government to provide affordable healthcare services,” said Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH.

“In our pre-budget recommendations also, we have strongly recommended that to spur investment in the sector, the Government could consider a tax holiday period of 15 years for hospitals,” he added.
Siddhartha Bhattacharya, Secretary-General, NATHEALTH, said, “A priority sector status will act as a catalyst for channelizing funds for the sector from financing agencies. Higher investments would ensure quality infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas. Such a move would also ensure that the societal objectives of the Government are adequately met.”
NATIONAL

27 December 19

NATIONAL suggests a zero-rating GST for healthcare services

*NATHEALTH recommends GST relief for healthcare sector while citing that the increasing pressure on the sector is because of slowing investments and need for higher government funding allocations.*

Apex healthcare industry body *NATHEALTH*, in its pre-budget recommendations, called for building capacity in Tier-II and III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well.

On taxation issues, it has recommended two options on Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Firstly, NATHEALTH suggested a zero-rating GST for healthcare services. “Rationalization of GST for healthcare input services would lead to the unlocking of the differential input credit and will ease costs for all healthcare providers including nursing homes, clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centres. This saving will be passed on to the end consumers and will lower the cost of care,” NATHEALTH said in a joint memorandum with FICCI.

Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH expressed his views on the same, by saying, “Since GST is not payable on healthcare services, healthcare service providers are not eligible to avail credit on the input tax paid by it, which ultimately becomes a cost for the service provider. Under the current GST regime, the net impact of revised tax rates on inputs (goods and services) consumed by hospitals has increased. As this incremental cost is ultimately borne by the patients, it defeats the intention of the government to provide affordable healthcare services.”

He further added, “The government needs to provide tax incentives for both existing and new projects. In our pre-budget recommendations also, we have strongly
recommended that to spur investment in the sector, the government could consider a tax holiday period of 15 years for hospitals. The length of the period of exemption needs to be longer, as new hospitals take at least five to seven years to start earning returns, after recovering interest and depreciation. For existing projects incentives can be given for ten years, to support re-investment in capacity and technology upgrades."

Underlining the importance of capacity building, Siddhartha Bhattacharya, Secretary-General, NATHEALTH said, “A priority sector status will act as a catalyst for channelizing funds for the sector from financing agencies. Higher investments would ensure quality infrastructure in Tier II and III cities and rural areas. Such a move would also ensure that the societal objectives of the government are adequately met.”

He also elaborated on the fact that the harmonized master list of infrastructure sub-sectors by the Reserve Bank of India in 2012 includes healthcare as a priority area for development. But since, these projects are often long term based and require adequate funding options which are unavailable at a healthcare provider level, the long term funding options with clearly defined gestation period would certainly be a step in the right direction.

**Following are the recommendations and suggestions that the apex healthcare body has put forth for the government:**

1. Facilitating ease of access to capital, NATHEALTH recommends a dedicated fund for healthcare infrastructure and innovation not only for encouraging entrepreneurship with newer business models but also improve accessibility, availability and quality in Tier II and III cities including rural areas.

2. Emphasizing on the problem of low penetration of health insurance is a major reason behind the rising out-of-pocket spending for healthcare services in India, NATHEALTH recommends the government should undertake additional efforts to make mandatory coverage for all citizens.

3. NATHEALTH suggests that organized sector employees could be given the option of paying their ESI contribution or purchasing insurance from any IRDA regulated insurance company. Gradually, the focus can then be shifted to the middle and upper-middle classes respectively to ensure access to preventive and curative care of sufficient quality and safeguards the entire community from financial distress.
4. The industry rightly expects that the Union Budget 2020-21 will be announced keeping in focus the incentives for medical value tourism, zero-rating GST on healthcare services and health insurance premiums.

5. Other areas which require efforts include incentivizing capacity building and promotional policies for private providers. These are long-standing suggestions from the Industry and are critical to expediting investment in the capacity building especially in Tier II and III cities for the realization of the dream of universal healthcare.
Strengthening The Indian Health System
December 2019

India’s healthcare system resembles a *sinking ship*, remarked Alok Kumar, adviser, Niti Aayog, at the NatHealth Sixth Annual Summit held recently in the Capital. As harsh as it may sound, it is not far from the truth. India’s health system is a story of multiple fragmentations – a fragmentation of payers and risk pools; deep fragmentation of providers of healthcare services; and also of the digital backbone running it. And the multiple fragmentations, compounded by market failures and governance challenges drive each other.

It is in this context that Niti Aayog laid out a comprehensive roadmap in a book titled *New India: Building Blocks – Potential Pathways to Reforms*, released recently. In the Three-Year Action Agenda, it has restricted its focus in this document to four areas, namely, financing and risk pooling, strategic purchasing, organization and provision, and digital health.

The think tank has also presented the Medical Devices Bill, which proposes to bring all medical devices under one regulatory regime in a phased manner. The draft Bill proposes to have four separate divisions under the new Medical Devices Administration – health and safety division, conformity assessment division, enforcement division, and the laboratories and medical devices testing division.

As the implementation of Ayushman Bharat scheme progresses, the cracks are beginning to show. Hospitals across the country are facing a cash-flow problem. The government is not able to release payments for the cashless treatment done under the health schemes, and the dues are continuing to pile up. The hospitals are considering taking the exit route. Just a fortnight before this, 338 hospitals had been served show-cause notices and were de-empaneled, and penalties of over Rs 3 crore levied on them for submitting forged claims under the scheme.

As we usher in the new year, the diagnostics sector must prepare itself for a major disruption, not very different from its telecom counterpart, as Reliance Life Sciences announces its intention to set up a network of pathology labs across India through partnerships with local entrepreneurs. The existing path labs can expect cut-throat competition and price wars, and the vendors, a more commoditized business model!
Healthcare Federation of India urges government for zero-rating GST on healthcare services

The apex industry body also called for building capacity in tier-II and III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well.

NEW DELHI: Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) on Thursday urged the government for bringing in zero-rating GST for healthcare services and making it a priority sector to meet its long-term funding and financing requirements.

In its pre-Budget recommendations, the apex industry body also called for building capacity in tier-II and III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well.
The industry expects that "the Union Budget 2020-21 will be announced keeping in focus the incentives for medical value tourism, zero-rating GST on healthcare services and health insurance premiums", NATHEALTH said.

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NATIONAL

27 December 19

https://nrinews24x7.com/nathealth-recommends-gst-relief-for-healthcare-sector/

NATHEALTH recommends GST Relief for Healthcare Sector

Posted By: admin  on: December 26, 2019  In: Health Care  No Comments

Cites the increasing pressure on healthcare sector due to slowing investments and need for higher Government Funding Allocations

- NATHEALTH recommends Zero-rating GST for healthcare services
- NATHEALTH recommends the government to make Healthcare a priority sector to meet the long term funding and financing requirements and accelerate its funding commitment to 2.5% GDP as outlined in National Health Policy 2017
- Clear CGHS and ECHS arrears immediately and setup a mechanism for regular timely disbursement mechanism for insurance claims
- The Government may consider tax holiday period of 15 years for hospitals to spur new investments and cater to supply side expansion in Tier 2/3
Reversal of Custom Duties on Diagnostics and rationalize import tariffs for healthcare products while keeping patient service as top priority

Create Enabling and a Fair and Transparent playing field for Medical technology Products under “Make in India”

PUNE: As the government prepares to present its Union Budget 2020-21 on February 1, 2020, apex healthcare industry body NATHEALTH, in its pre-budget recommendations, called for building capacity in Tier-II & III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well.

On taxation issues, the Apex Healthcare Industry body has recommended two options on Goods and Services Tax (GST). Firstly, NATHEALTH suggested a Zero-rating GST for healthcare services.

“Rationalization of GST for healthcare input services would lead to the unlocking of the differential input credit and will ease costs for all healthcare providers including nursing homes, clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centres. This saving will be passed on to the end consumers and will lower the cost of care,” NATHEALTH said in a joint memorandum with FICCI.

“Since GST is not payable on health care services, health care service providers are not eligible to avail credit on the input taxes paid by it, which ultimately becomes a cost for the service provider. Under the current GST regime, the net impact of revised tax rates on inputs (goods and services) consumed by hospitals has increased. As this incremental cost is ultimately borne by the patients, it defeats the intention of the Government to provide affordable healthcare services,” Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH said in the joint pre-budget memorandum.
“The government needs to provide tax incentives for both existing and new projects. In our pre-budget recommendations also, we have strongly recommended that to spur investment in the sector, the Government could consider a tax holiday period of 15 years for hospitals. The length of the period of exemption needs to be longer, as new hospitals take at least 5-7 years to start earning returns, after recovering interest and depreciation. For existing projects incentives can be given for 10 years, to support re-investment in capacity and technology upgrades,” he added.

“Underlining the importance of capacity building, Mr. Siddhartha Bhattacharya, Secretary-General, NATHEALTH said, “A priority sector status will act as a catalyst for channelizing funds for the sector from financing agencies. Higher investments would ensure quality infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas. Such a move would also ensure that the societal objectives of the Government are adequately met.”

“The harmonized master list of infrastructure sub sectors by the Reserve Bank of India in 2012 includes Healthcare as a priority area for development. However, often these projects are long term based and require adequate funding options which are still not available at a Healthcare provider level. Thus long term funding options with clearly defined gestation period would certainly be a step in the right direction” – he added.

Following are the recommendations and suggestions that the apex healthcare body has put forth for the Government:

1. Facilitating ease of access to capital, NATHEALTH recommends a dedicated fund for healthcare infrastructure and innovation not only for encouraging entrepreneurship with newer business models but also improve accessibility, availability and quality in Tier 2&3 cities including rural areas.
2. Emphasizing on the problem of low penetration of health insurance being a major reason behind the rising out-of-pocket spending for healthcare services in India, NATHEALTH recommends the government should undertake additional efforts to make mandatory coverage for all citizens.

3. NATHEALTH suggests that organized sector employees could be given the option of paying their ESI contribution or purchasing insurance from any IRDA regulated insurance company. Gradually, the focus can be then shifted to the middle and upper middle classes respectively in order to ensure access to preventive and curative care of sufficient quality and safeguards the entire community from financial distress.

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NATHEALTH urges govt for zero-rating GST on healthcare services

New Delhi, Dec 24 (PTI) Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) on Thursday urged the government for bringing in zero-rating GST for healthcare services and making it a priority sector to meet its long-term funding and financing requirements.

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Written By Press Trust Of India | Mumbai | Updated On: December 26, 2019 18:47 IST

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READ | Haryana's Revenue Under State GST Records 33 Pc Growth In Nov
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READ | GST Council Meet: Most States Were Opposed To Change In Slabs, Hike In GST

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नेत्रेहल्थ की स्वास्थ्य सेवा क्षेत्र के लिए जीएसटी में राहत की सिफारिश
नई दिल्ली 26 दिसंबर (तारी) स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं प्रदान करने वाले उद्योग के प्रमुख संगठन नैदेहल्थ ने सरकार से आगे वित्त वर्ष के बजट में मद्दी और छोटे शहरों में इस क्षेत्र में क्षमता बढाने की अपील करते हुए वस्तु एवं सेवा कर (जीएसटी) में राहत की सिफारिश की है।
संगठन ने गूगल को यहां जारी एक बयान में कहा कि उससे जीएसटी के लिए दो विकल्पों की सिफारिश की है।
सबसे पहले स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं के लिए जीरो-रेटिंग जीएसटी का सुझाव दिया गया है। उससे फिरकी के साथ एक संयुक्त ज्ञापन में कहा कि हेल्थकेयर इनपुट सेवाओं के लिए जीएसटी के गुणवत्ताकरण से खास इनपुट क्रेडिट को अन्तर्गत होगा और नर्सिंग होम, वैद्यनाथ, अस्पताल और नैदानिक केंद्रों सहित सभी स्वास्थ्य सेवा प्रदाताओं के लिए लागत में कमी आएगी। यह बचत उपभोक्ताओं के काम आएगी और स्वास्थ्य देखभाल की लागत कम होगी।

Posted at Dec 26 2019 | Time 8:16PM
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बिज़्नेस स्टैंडर्ड

स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं पर हो शून्य जीएसटी
भाषा / नई दिल्ली December 26, 2019

शीर्ष स्वास्थ्य संगठन हेल्थकेरर्ड फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (नेटहेल्थ) ने आज सरकार से स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं के लिए जीएसटी को शून्य करने और पूरी जरूरतों को पूरा करने के लिए क्षेत्र प्राथमिक क्षेत्र बनाने का आग्रह किया। फेडरेशन ने अपनी बजट-पूर्व सिफारिशों में दृसरे और तौसरे श्रेणी के शहरों में क्षमता का निर्माण करने का भी आंदोलन किया है। यह ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में गुणवत्तापूर्ण स्वास्थ्य सेवा की बढ़ती मांगों को भी पूरा करेगा।

नेटहेल्थ के अध्यक्ष सुदर्शन बललाल ने कहा, 'स्वास्थ्य सेवा उद्योग को उम्मीद है कि चिकित्सा पर्यटन को बढ़ाने के लिए प्रोत्साहन, स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं और स्वास्थ्य बीमा के प्रीमियम पर शून्य जीएसटी जैसी चीजों का ध्यान रखकर आम बजट 2020-21 घोषित किया जाएगा।' स्वास्थ्य संगठन ने फिक्री के साथ संयुक्त जापान में कहा कि स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं के लिए जीएसटी को तरक़बंगत बनाने से इनपुट क्रेडिट का मुदा सुलझाए और नर्सिंग होम, कैन्सिन, अस्पताल और डायएमेटिक केंद्रों समेत सभी स्वास्थ्य सेवा प्रदाताओं की लागत में कम आएगी। उन्होंने कहा कि कर में कमी का फायदा आखिरकार उपभोक्ताओं को ही होगा और स्वास्थ्य सेवा की लागत घटेगी।
Year-end review of key developments in the health sector

The year 2019 saw some high as well as low points as far as the health segment is concerned.

By Rajeev Ahuja

This year saw significant strides in the health sector whether it was getting new legislation passed or fine-tuning policies or devising new programmes/strategies or improving programme implementation.

National Medical Commission (NMC) Act and the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act are two important legislations passed this year. While the NMC Act will enable reforming of medical education in India, the E-cigarettes Act will shield the Indian youth from picking up this harmful addiction.

In terms of fine-tuning of policies in health system design, Niti Aayog released a report on building a 21st-century health system for India. The report is significant as it marks the first systematic attempt at exploring policy options available to India in certain key areas such as health care financing, risk pooling, strategic purchasing, health-service provisioning, and digital health. It will be interesting to see what policy options the country ends up choosing in due course.
Concerning the new programmes launched this year, two nation-wide programmes need special mention. One is Fit India Movement and the other is Eat Right India. Both these preventive health programmes will have huge implications on the health of Indians and therefore will also affect the future disease burden due to lifestyle diseases.

On programme implementation, both pillars of Ayushman Bharat Yojana or Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) made significant progress in their implementation. Regarding the primary care pillar that deals with establishing 150,000 health and wellness centres (HWCs) by 2022, the government approved over 60,000 centres of which 23,000 got operationalized by the end of October this year.

The free hospitalization programme – PMJAY, provided treatment to nearly 70 lakh beneficiaries in empanelled hospitals, nearly 20,000 of them. PMJAY implementation deepened in several dimensions: in empanelling more and more hospitals including those in the public sector (ESIC hospitals and hospitals of central public sector enterprises), incentivizing private sector to invest in hospitals in tier II and III cities, collaborating with healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) to introduce innovations for increasing access to quality care, encouraging hospital for higher accreditation standards, checking fraud and corruption and so forth.

Modi government has maintained its basic thrust of making healthcare affordable and accessible to the Indian masses. Accordingly, the government has brought more non-scheduled medicines for cancer and rare disease in the list of medicines subjected to a cap on trade margins charged by drug retailers and stockists. Further, it has taken a decision to regulate all medical devices. Currently, only a small fraction of (23 of more than 5000) medical devices are regulated. Once this regulation kicks in, it will potentially guard against any mal-practice by device manufacturers or importers/distributors in the country.

The government has attached primacy to digital health that has a huge potential to make healthcare affordable and accessible. The government released National Digital Health Blueprint that provides guidance on mainstreaming of digital health interventions across the health spectrum.

This year witnessed a few misses too. For example, on the public health spending goal of 2.5 per cent of GDP by 2025, the Health Policy 2017 has set an intermediate goal of states stepping up their health spending to at least 8 per cent of their budgets by 2020, which has been missed by a huge margin (as per 2019-20 health allocations). The other miss has been on the Surrogacy Regulation Bill which is yet to be legislated. Overall, it was a great year with significant strides made in the health sector.
Budget 2020: NATHEALTH Urges Govt For Zero-Rating GST On Health Services

December 27, 2019

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नर्यी दिल्ली, 24 दिसंबर (भारत) शीर्ष स्वास्थ्य संगठन हेल्थकेयर फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (नेटेलेथ्स्थ) ने सरकार से स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं के लिए जीएसटी की शुरू करने और पूंजी जनरेटर्स को पूरा करने के लिए क्षेत्र प्रामाणिक क्षेत्र बनाने का बुनाईपतियार को आग्रह किया।

फेडरेशन ने अपनी बजट - पूर्व सिफारिशों में दूसरे और तीसरे श्रेणी के शहरों में क्षमता का निर्माण करने का भी आवाजाह किया है। यह ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में गूणवत्ता पूर्व स्वास्थ्य सेवा की बढ़ती मांगों को भी पूरा करेगा। नेटेलेथ्स्थ के अध्यक्ष सुदर्शन कल्ताल ने कहा, " भारत सेवा उद्योग का उम्मीद है कि " चिकित्सा पर्यटन को बढ़ाने के लिए प्रोटेस्ट , स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं और स्वास्थ्य बीमा के प्रीमियम पर शुन्य जीएसटी जैसी चीजों का ध्यान रखकर आम बजट 2020-21 पोषित किया जाएगा। " स्वास्थ्य संगठन ने फिक्की के साथ
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संयुक्त ज्ञापन में कहा कि स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं के लिए जीएसटी को तर्कसंगत बनाने से इनपुट क्रेडिट का अधिक सुलझाया और नर्सिंग होम, क्लीनिक, अस्पताल और डायग्नॉस्टिक केंद्रों समेत सभी स्वास्थ्य सेवा प्रदाताओं की लागत में कम आएगी। उन्होंने कहा कि इस अंदाज में कमी का फायदा आखिरकार उपभोक्ताओं को ही होगा और स्वास्थ्यसेवा की लागत घटेगी।
 здоровье | सर्विसीज पर बजेटमां जीरो-रेटिंग जुगोस्त्रीनी मागानी

नवગुજरात समय

प्रत्येक सत्राल्यास सर्विसीज पर जीरो-रेटिंग ही असेस्टनी मागणी

1/1 हेल्थकेर सर्विसीज पर बजेटमां जीरो-रेटिंग जुगोस्त्रीनी मागणी

हेल्थकेर पर जुगोस्त्री लागतो न होयाही इनपुट टेक्स फिक्तूर्स लाग म्हणतो नयी

अेच-सो > नवी खिड़की
હેલ્થસેક્ટર ઇડેશન ઓફા ઇન્ડિયાને ગુજરાતમાં વાવસ્થાનું સમાચાર માગ્યું કરી હતી કે આજીઓ બજેટમાં હેલ્થસેક્ટર
વસ્તીમાં પર જીરો હોકટ ઘણેટી ગાય થર્પો છોટો અને તસે પ્રાવોયિટી સેક્ટર ભારતપુલ્લ આર્નો તેની લાંબા
ગાયાનતસાંથની જણિયાત હસ્તોજી વાળી શકાય. સંગઠન કહ્યુ હતું કે ઇચ આમ બાબી તો ટેકસનો
દ વાલ્સ માચા તે આલો સુધી પહોંચાિયા અને હેલ્થસેક્ટર સેવા સાવે પાણી કરવામાં આવશ્યે. હાલાંક હેલ્થસેક્ટર
પર ઘણેટી સુરેખ નોંધવી હેલ્થસેક્ટર વસ્તી પ્રોનેંઝરને ઇનપુટ ટેક્સટ ક્રિટ વધુ શકાતા નથી. તેને કારણે
સોલેટલોનો પરિસ્થિતિય વધી ગયું છે.

જથેત અનગરા આ હેલ્થસેક્ટર સેક્ટરના સંગઠન તેની ભાવાયમાં કહ્યુ હતું કે નાના શહેરો અને હામારા વિસ્તારમાં
નકલ જીઃ કરવા માટે પાયાસ ઇંટી જરૂરિમાં જિલી બાબી. આળી આ સેક્ટર પર જીરો રેટિંગ ટેક્સટ ક્રિટ હેપાશે
શો મોટી રાહ બાબી. નેટ઼હેલ્થ (NATHEALTH)ઓએ કહ્યુ હતું કે 2020-21નું જથેત મદદિકલ વેબ્સ્ટુ હોરિઝોમ માટે
વસ્તીમાં પર ડ્રોઝ કરીને જથેત હોય તે આશા છે અને આપણા સંભોગનો હેલ્થસેક્ટર સેક્ટર અને હેલ્થ
વસ્તીમાં પ્રીન્યાપ પર જીરો ઘણેટી કરી ટેક્સટ તેવા આસા છે.
'Zero-Rating GST in National Health Budget': NATHEALTH Urges Govt

Government to bring in zero-rating GST for healthcare services

Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) on Thursday, 26 December, urged the government for bringing in zero-rating GST for healthcare services and making it a priority sector to meet its long-term funding and financing requirements.

In its pre-Budget recommendations, the apex industry body also called for building capacity in tier-II and III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well. The industry expects that "the Union Budget 2020-21 will be announced keeping in focus the incentives for medical value tourism, zero-rating GST on healthcare services and health insurance premiums", NATHEALTH said.
नरी दिल्लीः शीर्ष स्वास्थ्य संगठन हेल्थकेयर फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (नेटहेल्थ) ने सरकार से स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं के लिए जीएसटी को शून्य करने और पूंजी जरूरतों की पूरा करने के लिए क्षेत्र प्राथमिक क्षेत्र बनाने की गुरुवार को अपील की। फेडरेशन ने अपनी बजटपूर्व सिफारिशों में दृश्य और तीसरे श्रेणी के शहरों में क्षमता का निर्माण करने का भी आह्वान किया। यह ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में गुणवत्तापूर्ण स्वास्थ्य सेवा की बढ़ती मांगों को भी पूरा करेगा।

नेटहेल्थ के अध्यक्ष सुदर्शन बल्लाल ने कहा कि स्वास्थ्य सेवा उद्योग को उम्मीद है कि निकिता पर्यटन को बढ़ाने के लिए प्रोत्साहन, स्वास्थ्य
सेवाओं और स्वास्थ्य बीमा के प्रीमियम पर शून्य जीएसटी जैसी चीजों का ध्यान रखकर आम बजट 2020-21 घोषित किया जायेगा. स्वास्थ्य संगठन ने फिककी के साथ संयुक्त ज्ञान संगठन ने कहा कि स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं के लिए जीएसटी को तर्कसंगत बनाने से इनपुट क्रेडिट का मुद्दा सुलझेगा।

इसके साथ ही, नर्सिंग होम, क्लीनिक, अस्पताल और डायग्नोस्टिक सेंटर्स समेत सभी स्वास्थ्य सेवा प्रदाताओं की लागत में कम आयेगी। उन्होंने कहा कि कर में कमी का फायदा आखिरकार उपभोक्ताओं को ही होगा और स्वास्थ्यसेवा की लागत घटेगी.
**THE ECONOMIC TIMES**

**NATHEALTH Seeks Zero GST for Healthcare Services**

27 Dec 2019  +1 more

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**NEW DELHI**
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This saving will be passed on to the end consumers and will lower the cost of care, it added.

“Since GST is not payable on healthcare services, healthcare service providers are not eligible to avail credit on the input taxes paid by them, which ultimately becomes a cost for the service provider. Under the current GST regime, the net impact of revised tax rates on inputs (goods and services) consumed by hospitals has increased.”

Sudarshan Ballal, NATHEALTH President

As this incremental cost is ultimately borne by the patients, it defeats the intention of the government to provide affordable healthcare services, he added.

(This story was auto-published from a syndicated feed. No part of the story has been edited by FIT.)

(India, and the Capital especially, has been in an air pollution crisis. How has the hazardous air pollution impacted you? Write down your #PollutionKaSolution and send it to us at FIT@thequint.com.)
2020: Indian pharma 'sunrise' segment, prognosis positive for healthcare sector

By Ajay Tyagi & Munish Shekhavat

New Delhi, Dec 28 (PTI) Nourished by increasing spending, improving accessibility and growing exports, India’s pharma and healthcare sector is poised for another year of robust growth even as pricing and cost headwinds could force players to pause to catch breath.

The next wave of growth could come from increasing exports to large and traditionally under penetrated markets such as Japan, China, Africa, Indonesia, and Latin America, which would help the industry meet its aspiration of becoming the world’s largest supplier by volume, according to pharma industry body Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA).

Experts said improved access to medicines in India and exploring new markets while maintaining thrust in the US will help the country’s pharma industry to record double-digit growth in the coming year.

However, the sector, specially pharmaceuticals, will be up against headwinds of increased costs related to regulatory compliances, particularly for the US market, price controls across markets and mandatory genericisation in India.

"The Indian Pharmaceutical industry is a sunrise industry with a competitive advantage for India. We should leverage India's position by unleashing entrepreneurial spirit through policy stability and ecosystem," IPA Secretary General Sudarshan Jain said.

The bullish outlook for the sector is also reflected in the forecast by rating agency ICRA, which has projected the Indian pharmaceutical industry to grow around 10-12 per cent between FY2019 and FY2022 while maintaining a stable outlook on the sector.
It cited abating headwinds from pricing pressure in the US (which is the largest regulated market), stable growth for the Indian market driven by increasing healthcare spending and better accessibility as likely key growth drivers for the Indian pharma companies, coupled with comfortable balance sheet structure.

As for the healthcare sector, Apollo Hospitals Group MD Suneeta Reddy said, "The prognosis is positive."

The optimism is driven by the Indian government's thrust on universal healthcare through Ayushman Bharat and an increasing number of middle-class seeking quality and affordable healthcare, along with the ability of private payers to attract global patients.

Reddy said the private Indian healthcare providers are also ready to play their part in accelerating the country's economic growth.

"... the sector is capable of delivering strong impetus for India's economy at a time when the country needs to hear good news on the economic front," she noted.

Reddy cited the ability of private healthcare providers to create five direct jobs plus many more indirect jobs per bed, two and half times multiplier on capital invested along with global prestige and stature driven by the Medical Value Travel programmes as key strengths of the sector.

Having gone through 2019, during which domestic drug firms came under the scanner of the US health regulator -- US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) -- which red-flagged homegrown majors like Aurobindo Pharma, Torrent Pharmaceuticals, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, and Cadila Healthcare, among others for lapses at their facilities, the challenges remain real.

Yes Securities Senior Analyst - Institutional Equities - Bhavesh Gandhi said, "pharma sector continued to show divergent trends in 2019 with the domestic market growing at a steady 9-10 per cent run rate offset by persistent challenges in US generics".

Most of the domestic-focused companies saw healthy traction in revenues on the back of market tailwinds, he said. The US business has proved to be a tough task for yet another year as structural headwinds still persisted despite the flattening out of price erosion at 5-6 per cent as compared to steeper falls in earlier years, he added.
Max Healthcare & Radiant Life Care Chairman & MD Abhay Soi said in 2020, the global and domestic demand for quality and cost-effective healthcare services is expected to grow further. The Indian healthcare sector has the potential to be amongst the highest revenue and employment generator for the country.

"A shift towards patient-centric quality care, enhanced use of technology in delivering care, and higher share of India in medical tourism are some of the dominant trends which the Indian healthcare sector is going to witness in 2020," he noted.

As for the service providers, he said,"I believe, in 2020 and onwards, the main differentiator would be patient care and service. Healthcare institutions would be focusing on all the key touchpoints of the entire patient journey".

Highlighting the priorities, Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) President Sudarshan Ballal said that in 2020, 'Health for Healthcare' would be the main mantra for all stakeholders including policymakers and regulators.

"Balancing sustainability, improving quality, and value creation would be the top priorities for the sector. There is a need for quality healthcare to be delivered to everyone in India, hence incentivising capacity building in Tier II & III cities would go a long way in achieving the goal of universal healthcare," he added.

Healthcare in India is on the cusp of significant transformation -- demographic, regulatory, technological and financial -- Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) President A Vaidheesh said.

Indian government's thrust on universal healthcare through Ayushman Bharat and an estimated 140 million households expected to enter the middle class in the next decade, not only increases the consumption of healthcare services but also has an impact on healthcare demand and a significant uptake inpatient volumes, he added.

While it seems all hunky-dory, medical devices manufacturers want issues affecting them to be addressed satisfactorily.

Medical devices makers' body, AdvaMed Vice President Abby Pratt said it would urge the government to promote the adoption of global harmonisation, including internationally recognised standards, that would not only help ensure the quality and efficacy of products but also enable an ecosystem for manufacturing, research, and innovation for benefits of patients in India.
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India’s pharma, healthcare sectors poised for another year of robust growth

By PTI | Published: December 28, 2019 11:47:27 AM

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**Read Also: National Health Authority and NATHEALTH Sign MOU to drive innovations in healthcare sector**

“Since GST is not payable on healthcare services, healthcare service providers are not eligible to avail credit on the input taxes paid by them, which ultimately becomes a cost for the service provider. Under the current GST regime, the net impact of revised tax rates on inputs (goods and services) consumed by hospitals has increased,” NATHEALTH President Sudarshan Ballal said.

As this incremental cost is ultimately borne by the patients, it defeats the intention of the government to provide affordable healthcare services, he added.

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Medical Dialogues Bureau

Medical Dialogues Bureau consists of a team of passionate medical/scientific writers, led by doctors and healthcare researchers. Our team efforts to bring you updated and timely news about the important happenings of the medical and healthcare sector. Our editorial team can be reached at editorial@medicaldialogues.in. Check out more about our bureau/team [here](#)
2020: Indian pharma ‘sunrise’ segment, prognosis positive for healthcare sector

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New Delhi: Nourished by increasing spending, improving accessibility and growing exports, India’s pharma and healthcare sector is poised for another year of robust growth even as pricing and cost headwinds could force players to pause to catch breath.

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However, the sector, specially pharmaceuticals, will be up against headwinds of increased costs related to regulatory compliances, particularly for the US market, price controls across markets and mandatory genericisation in India.

“The Indian Pharmaceutical industry is a sunrise industry with a competitive advantage for India. We should leverage India’s position by unleashing entrepreneurial spirit through policy stability and ecosystem,” IPA Secretary General Sudarshan Jain said.

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Press Trust of India Dec 28, 2019

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Image Source: Google
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(This story has not been edited by Business Standard staff and is auto-generated from a syndicated feed.)

First Published: Sat, December 28 2019. 11:00 IST

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Experts said improved access to medicines in India and exploring new markets while maintaining thrust in the US will help the country’s pharma industry to record double-digit growth in the coming year.

However, the sector, specially pharmaceuticals, will be up against headwinds of increased costs related to regulatory compliances, particularly for the US market, price controls across markets and mandatory genericisation in India.

“The Indian Pharmaceutical industry is a sunrise industry with a competitive advantage for India. We should leverage India’s position by unleashing entrepreneurial spirit through policy stability and ecosystem,” IPA Secretary General Sudarshan Jain said.

The bullish outlook for the sector is also reflected in the forecast by rating agency Icra, which has projected the Indian pharmaceutical industry to grow around 10-12 per cent between FY2019 and FY2022 while maintaining a stable outlook on the sector.

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The optimism is driven by the Indian government’s thrust on universal healthcare through Ayushman Bharat and an increasing number of middle-class seeking quality and affordable healthcare, along with the ability of private payers to attract global patients.

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### NATIONAL


- **NATHEALTH recommends Zero-rating GST for healthcare services**
- NATHEALTH recommends the government to make Healthcare a priority sector to meet the long term funding and financing requirements and accelerate its funding commitment to 2.5% GDP as outlined in National Health Policy 2017
- Clear CGHS and ECHS arrears immediately and setup a mechanism for regular timely disbursement mechanism for insurance claims
- *The Government may consider tax holiday period of 15 years for hospitals to spur new investments and cater to supply side expansion in Tier 2/3*
- Reversal of Custom Duties on Diagnostics and rationalize import tariffs for healthcare products while keeping patient service as top priority
- Create Enabling and a Fair and Transparent playing field for Medical technology Products under “Make in India”
- **Mumbai , December , 2019** As the government prepares to present its Union Budget 2020-21 on February 1, 2020, apex healthcare industry body NATHEALTH, in its pre-budget recommendations, called for building capacity in Tier-II & III cities which will cater to the growing demands of quality healthcare in rural areas as well.
On taxation issues, the Apex Healthcare Industry body has recommended two options on Goods and Services Tax (GST). Firstly, NATHEALTH suggested a Zero-rating GST for healthcare services.

“Rationalization of GST for healthcare input services would lead to the unlocking of the differential input credit and will ease costs for all healthcare providers including nursing homes, clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centres. This saving will be passed on to the end consumers and will lower the cost of care,” NATHEALTH said in a joint memorandum with FICCI.

“Since GST is not payable on health care services, health care service providers are not eligible to avail credit on the input taxes paid by it, which ultimately becomes a cost for the service provider. Under the current GST regime, the net impact of revised tax rates on inputs (goods and services) consumed by hospitals has increased. As this incremental cost is ultimately borne by the patients, it defeats the intention of the Government to provide affordable healthcare services,” Dr Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH said in the joint pre-budget memorandum.

“The government needs to provide tax incentives for both existing and new projects. In our pre-budget recommendations also, we have strongly recommended that to spur investment in the sector, the Government could consider a tax holiday period of 15 years for hospitals. The length of the period of exemption needs to be longer, as new hospitals take at-least 5-7 years to start earning returns, after recovering interest and depreciation. For existing projects incentives can be given for 10 years, to support re-investment in capacity and technology upgrades,” he added.

Underlining the importance of capacity building, Mr. Siddhartha Bhattacharya, Secretary-General, NATHEALTH said, “A priority sector status will act as a catalyst for channelizing funds for the sector from financing agencies. Higher investments would ensure quality infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas. Such a move would also ensure that the societal objectives of the Government are adequately met.”

“The harmonized master list of infrastructure sub sectors by the Reserve Bank of India in 2012 includes Healthcare as a priority area for development. However, often these projects are long term based and require adequate funding options which are still not available at a Healthcare provider level. Thus long term funding options with clearly defined gestation period would certainly be a step in the right direction” – he added.

Following are the recommendations and suggestions that the apex healthcare body has put forth for the Government:

1. Facilitating ease of access to capital, NATHEALTH recommends a dedicated fund for healthcare infrastructure and innovation not only for encouraging entrepreneurship
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with newer business models but also improve accessibility, availability and quality in Tier 2 & 3 cities including rural areas.

2. Emphasizing on the problem of low penetration of health insurance being a major reason behind the rising out-of-pocket spending for healthcare services in India, NATHEALTH recommends the government should undertake additional efforts to make mandatory coverage for all citizens.

3. NATHEALTH suggests that organized sector employees could be given the option of paying their ESI contribution or purchasing insurance from any IRDA regulated insurance company. Gradually, the focus can be then shifted to the middle and upper middle classes respectively in order to ensure access to preventive and curative care of sufficient quality and safeguards the entire community from financial distress.

4. The industry rightly expects that the Union Budget 2020-21 will be announced keeping in focus the incentives for medical value tourism, Zero rating GST on healthcare services and health insurance premiums.

5. Other areas which require efforts include incentivizing capacity building and promotional policies for private providers. These are long standing suggestions from the Industry and are critical to expedite investment in capacity building especially in Tier 2 & 3 cities for the realization of the dream of Universal Healthcare.

About NATHEALTH: NATHEALTH has been created with the Vision to “Be the credible and unified voice in improving access and quality of healthcare”. Leading Healthcare Service Providers, Medical Technology Providers (Devices, Equipment & IT), Diagnostic Service Providers, Health Insurance companies, Health Education Institutions, Medical Journalism companies, Biotech/Life sciences related companies, Healthcare Publishers, Healthcare Consultants, Home Healthcare companies, PE & VC companies and other stakeholders have come together to build NATHEALTH as a common platform to create the next level of momentum in Indian Healthcare. NATHEALTH is an inclusive Institution that has the representation of small & medium hospitals and nursing homes as well as Healthcare Start-up companies. NATHEALTH is committed to work on its mission to encourage innovation, help bridge the skill and capacity gap, help shape policy & regulations and enable the environment to fund long term growth. NATHEALTH aims to help build a better and healthier future for both rural and urban India.
Indian pharma 'sunrise' segment, year 2020 prognosis positive for healthcare sector

By PTI, Published: Dec 28, 2019, 11:44 am IST | Updated: Dec 28, 2019, 11:44 am IST

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The next wave of growth could come from increasing exports to large markets such as Japan, China and Africa among others. (Representational Image)
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INDIA BUSINESS

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NEW DELHI: Nourished by increasing spending, improving accessibility and growing exports, India’s pharma and healthcare sector is poised for another year of robust growth even as pricing and cost headwinds could force players to pause to catch breath. The next wave of growth could come from increasing exports to large and traditionally under penetrated markets such as Japan, China, Africa, Indonesia, and Latin America, which will help the industry meet its aspiration of becoming the world’s largest supplier by volume, according to pharma industry body Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA). Experts said improved access to medicines in India and exploring new markets while maintaining thrust in the US will help the country’s pharma industry to record double-digit growth in the coming year. However, the sector, specially pharmaceuticals, will be up against headwinds of increased costs related to regulatory compliances, particularly for the US market, price controls across markets and mandatory genericisation in India. “The Indian Pharmaceutical industry is a sunrise industry with a competitive advantage for India. We should leverage India’s position by unleashing entrepreneurial spirit through policy stability and ecosystem,” IPA Secretary General Sudarshan Jain said. The bullish outlook for the sector is also reflected in the forecast by rating agency Icra, which has projected the Indian pharmaceutical industry to grow around 10-12 per cent between FY2019 and FY2022 while maintaining a stable outlook on the sector. It cited abating headwinds from pricing pressure in the US (which is the largest regulated market), stable growth for the Indian market driven by increasing healthcare spending and better accessibility as likely key growth drivers for the Indian pharma companies, coupled with comfortable balance sheet structure. As for the healthcare sector, Apollo Hospitals Group MD Suneeta Reddy said, “The prognosis is positive.” The optimism is driven by the Indian government’s thrust on universal healthcare through Ayushman Bharat and an increasing number of middle-class seeking quality and affordable healthcare, along with the ability of private players to attract global patients. Reddy said the private Indian healthcare providers are also ready to play their part in accelerating India’s economic growth. “... the sector is capable of delivering strong impetus for India’s economy at a time when the country needs to hear good news on the economic front,” she noted. Reddy cited the ability of private healthcare providers to create five direct jobs plus many more indirect jobs per bed, two and half times multiplier on capital invested along with global prestige and stature driven by the Medical Valuo Travel programme as key strengths of the sector. Having gone through 2019, during which domestic drug firms came under the scanner of the US health regulator -- US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) -- which red-flagged homegrown majors like Aurobindo Pharma, Torrent Pharmaceuticals, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, and Cadila Healthcare, among others for lapses at their facilities, the challenges remain real. Yes Securities Senior Analyst - Institutional Equities - Bhavesh Gandhi said, “pharma sector continued to show divergent trends in 2019 with the domestic market growing at a steady 9-10 per cent run rate offset by persistent challenges in US generics”. Most of the domestic-focused companies saw healthy traction in revenues on the back of market tailwinds, he said. The US business has proved to be a tough task for yet another year as structural headwinds still persisted despite the flattening out of price erosion at 5-6 per cent as compared to steeper falls in earlier years, he added. Max Healthcare & Radiant Life Care Chairman & MD Abhay Soi said in 2020, the global and domestic demand for quality and cost-effective healthcare services is expected to grow further.
NATIONAL

31 December 19


In 2020, the global and domestic demand for quality and cost-effective healthcare services is expected to grow significantly. The Indian healthcare sector has the potential to be amongst the highest revenue and employment generator for the country. A shift towards patient-centric quality care, enhanced use of technology in delivering care, and higher share of India in medical tourism are some of the dominant trends which the Indian healthcare sector is going to witness in 2020, he noted. As for the service providers, he said: “I believe, in 2020 and onwards, the main differentiator would be patient care and service. Healthcare institutions would be focusing on all the key touchpoints of the entire patient journey”. Highlighting the priorities, Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) President Sudarshan Ballal said that in 2020, ‘Health for Healthcare’ would be the main mantra for all stakeholders including policymakers and regulators. “Balancing sustainability, improving quality, and value creation would be the top priorities for the sector. There is a need for quality healthcare to be delivered to everyone in India, hence incentivising capacity building in Tier II & III cities would go a long way in achieving the goal of universal healthcare,” he added. Healthcare in India is on the cusp of significant transformation – demographic, regulatory, technological and financial – Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) President A Vaidheesh said. Indian government’s thrust on universal healthcare through Ayushman Bharat and an estimated 140 million households expected to enter the middle class in the next decade, not only increases the consumption of healthcare services but also has an impact on healthcare demand and a significant uptake inpatient volumes, he added. While it seems all hunky-dory, medical devices manufacturers want issues affecting them to be addressed satisfactorily. Medical devices makers’ body, AdvaMed Vice President Abby Pratt said it would urge the government to promote the adoption of global harmonisation, including internationally recognised standards, that would not only help ensure the quality and efficacy of products but also enable an ecosystem for manufacturing, research, and innovation for benefits of patients in India.

More...
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**Tags:** pharma, pharmaceutical, healthcare sector, ayushman bharat, indian pharmaceutical alliance, apollo hospitals

**Location:** India, Delhi, New Delhi
Soon, interest subsidy on loans for pharmaceutical infrastructure, technology upgrades

The Department of Pharmaceuticals proposes to bear 6% of the interest on loans up to Rs 8-10 crore for three years, through a public sector financial institution to be selected after open competitive bidding.

By Teena Thacker, ET Bureau | Dec 31, 2019, 07:35 AM IST

NEW DELHI: The government is set to roll out an interest subsidy scheme to help small pharmaceutical companies upgrade infrastructure and technology to globally accepted standards, subject to achieving export targets.

The Department of Pharmaceuticals proposes to bear 6% of the interest on loans up to Rs 8-10 crore for three years, through a public sector financial institution to be selected after open competitive bidding.

“The Pharmaceutical Technology Upgradation Assistance Scheme (PTUAS) will help small and medium enterprises and is intended to improve manufacturing practices. We have held extensive consultations with the industry and now are set to launch the scheme in February,” said PD Vaghela, DoP secretary.

The DoP has budgeted about Rs 300 crore for disbursal as interest subsidy for 2020-2022. The proposal will be taken up for final approval by the steering committee, a panel of experts under the department, on January 14. The committee will also set penalties for defaulters.
Drug companies that avail of the scheme will have to achieve incremental export revenue exceeding the loan amount within 36 months, failing which they will pay a penalty, and the amount borrowed will be converted into a regular loan.

“The subvention amount credited to the loan account with the sanctioning commercial bank/financial institution will stand withdrawn if the company defaults,” according to a government official requesting anonymity.

The objective is to help small and medium pharma enterprises upgrade from Schedule M, the good manufacturing practices (GMP) laid out in India’s Drugs and Cosmetics Act, to standards mandated by the World Health Organization, which will enable them to compete in the global markets and improve earnings.

The lender must ensure that the beneficiary company obtains WHO-GMP certification within two years from the date of first disbursement of the loan. The scheme will also allow procurement of new machinery.

“Interest subvention against sanctioned loan by any scheduled commercial bank/financial institution, both in public and private sector, will be provided to medium enterprises of proven track record,” added another official.

“The scheme will boost Make in India as WHO-GMP is compulsory for participating in many tenders for supplying in government institutions. The scheme will also help companies to increase exports with strict safety regulations.” the official said.

Pharma groups welcomed the scheme, although some said the "export conditions" should be relaxed.

“The condition of export activity needs to be delinked from availing the loan. Export registration takes 3-4 years. Hence the DoP should not fix time limits,” a person affiliated with a pharma lobby group said on condition of anonymity.
Indian pharma 'sunrise' segment, year 2020 prognosis positive for healthcare sector

PTI | 28 Dec 2019 12:00 PM IST

**HIGHLIGHTS**

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PHARMA 'SUNRISE' SEGMENT, PROGNOSIS POSITIVE FOR HEALTHCARE SECTOR IN 2020

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Medical devices makers’ body, AdvaMed Vice President Abby Pratt said it would urge the government to promote the adoption of global harmonisation, including internationally recognised standards, that would not only help ensure the quality and efficacy of products but also enable an ecosystem for manufacturing, research, and innovation for benefits of patients in India.
New Delhi: Nourished by increasing spending, improving accessibility and growing exports, India’s pharma and healthcare sector is poised for another year of robust growth even as pricing and cost headwinds could force players to pause to catch breath.

The next wave of growth could come from increasing exports to large and traditionally under penetrated markets such as Japan, China, Africa, Indonesia, and Latin America, which would help the industry meet its aspiration of becoming the world’s largest supplier by volume, according to pharma industry body Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA).

Experts said improved access to medicines in India and exploring new markets while maintaining thrust in the US will help the country’s pharma industry to record double-digit growth in the coming year.

However, the sector, specially pharmaceuticals, will be up against headwinds of increased costs related to regulatory compliances, particularly for the US market, price controls across markets and mandatory genericisation in India.
“The Indian Pharmaceutical industry is a sunrise industry with a competitive advantage for India. We should leverage India’s position by unleashing entrepreneurial spirit through policy stability and ecosystem,” IPA Secretary General Sudarshan Jain said.

The bullish outlook for the sector is also reflected in the forecast by rating agency Icra, which has projected the Indian pharmaceutical industry to grow around 10-12 per cent between FY2019 and FY2022 while maintaining a stable outlook on the sector.

It cited abating headwinds from pricing pressure in the US (which is the largest regulated market), stable growth for the Indian market driven by increasing healthcare spending and better accessibility as likely key growth drivers for the Indian pharma companies, coupled with comfortable balance sheet structure.

As for the healthcare sector, Apollo Hospitals Group MD Suneeta Reddy said, “The prognosis is positive.”

The optimism is driven by the Indian government’s thrust on universal healthcare through Ayushman Bharat and an increasing number of middle-class seeking quality and affordable healthcare, along with the ability of private payers to attract global patients.

Reddy said the private Indian healthcare providers are also ready to play their part in accelerating the country’s economic growth.

“… the sector is capable of delivering strong impetus for India’s economy at a time when the country needs to hear good news on the economic front,” she noted.

Reddy cited the ability of private healthcare providers to create five direct jobs plus many more indirect jobs per bed, two and half times multiplier on capital invested along with global prestige and stature driven by the Medical Value Travel programmes as key strengths of the sector.

Having gone through 2019, during which domestic drug firms came under the scanner of the US health regulator — US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) — which red-flagged homegrown majors like Aurobindo Pharma, Torrent Pharmaceuticals, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, and Cadila Healthcare, among others for lapses at their facilities, the challenges remain real.

Yes Securities Senior Analyst – Institutional Equities – Bhavesh Gandhi said, “pharma sector continued to show divergent trends in 2019 with the domestic market growing at a steady 9-10 per cent run rate offset by persistent challenges in US generics”.

Most of the domestic-focused companies saw healthy traction in revenues on the back of market tailwinds, he said. The US business has proved to be a tough task for yet another year as
structural headwinds still persisted despite the flattening out of price erosion at 5-6 per cent as compared to steeper falls in earlier years, he added.

Max Healthcare & Radiant Life Care Chairman & MD Abhay Soi said in 2020, the global and domestic demand for quality and cost-effective healthcare services is expected to grow further. The Indian healthcare sector has the potential to be amongst the highest revenue and employment generator for the country.

“A shift towards patient-centric quality care, enhanced use of technology in delivering care, and higher share of India in medical tourism are some of the dominant trends which the Indian healthcare sector is going to witness in 2020,” he noted.

As for the service providers, he said, “I believe, in 2020 and onwards, the main differentiator would be patient care and service. Healthcare institutions would be focusing on all the key touchpoints of the entire patient journey”.

Highlighting the priorities, Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) President Sudarshan Ballal said that in 2020, ‘Health for Healthcare’ would be the main mantra for all stakeholders including policymakers and regulators.

“Balancing sustainability, improving quality, and value creation would be the top priorities for the sector. There is a need for quality healthcare to be delivered to everyone in India, hence incentivising capacity building in Tier II & III cities would go a long way in achieving the goal of universal healthcare,” he added.

Healthcare in India is on the cusp of significant transformation — demographic, regulatory, technological and financial — Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) President A Vaidheesh said.

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