Private sector has a major role to play in healthcare delivery

Avind Lal
feedback@einstein.com

Over the past few years, the once-obscure idea of universal health coverage (UHC) has blossomed into a movement embraced by leading establishments in global health. The Indian government, for one, has come with a national health policy. With most economies working towards an infrastructure which is better equipped to realize the vision of UHC, the role that private entities play in this must be understood closely. India as a nation presents a diverse set of demographics, which makes it difficult for any single set of services or health care to fit into all parts of its society. There have to be certain basic premises as to how the available funds are put to best use for healthcare.

Moreover, the role of the private sector vis-a-vis the public/private initiatives is to be clearly defined, so that the efforts are complementary. For standardization of healthcare services and accessibility, there must be further deliberation on the role of the private sector in achieving this. From a perspective on how public and private sectors can work together to address the challenges of affordability, quality and accessibility of care. Today, the private sector acts as a vibrant force in the Indian healthcare industry with over 70% contribution in healthcare delivery. India currently spends cumulatively 4.2% of its gross domestic product (GDP) on healthcare, with just 1.4% contribution by the government, which is among the lowest, globally. Even the projected government’s contribution by 2025 is 2.5% does not cut much of a percentage. Countries such as the UK, China and Indonesia lead the global statistics when it comes to public sector contribution. With an ever increasing scale, India is the fastest growing trillion dollar economy and the sixth largest with a nominal GDP of $2.63 trillion. Now, we aspire to become the third largest economy worth $3 trillion by 2030. As we try to achieve this goal, a healthy India also becomes a necessity as our non-communicable diseases (NCDs) burden is rising alarming and it is estimated to cost around 2% of our GDP. With NCDs contributing to around 58% (60%) of all deaths in India annually, the country’s burden of NCDs is escalating. Another challenge is that of the onset of such diseases starts a decade earlier, at 45 years, in India, while most developed countries start having it at 55+ years of age. The World Economic Forum Study says that the world will spend $30 trillion by 2030. In its essence, universal health care wants to ensure that citizens of our country obtain medical services they need sans any financial hardships while paying for them. This is mainly achieved between the financial and the state’s legal obligation to realize the human right to health. In the context of this goal, it is important to assess the private actors’ involvement in the health sector. For example, private actors may not always have the incentives to deal with externalities that affect the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of health care services; they may not be in a position to “pay” for these.

India can show a way to the world by adopting cohesive collaboration for a new healthcare ecosystem. Private providers have been playing a pivotal role. Hence, there is a need for partnerships with rational policy framework can take us to the next level to achieve the goal of ‘health for all’. Finally, affordability should not be sacrificed. If healthcare coverage was to be expanded by 2030, then people will have more money. So, let the different sections of the populace decide the services they want to avail based on their budget. In order to cater to the masses, we of course need a janus (mass) model, but, it must be remembered that “one size cannot fit all”.

Avind Lal is managing director, Dr Lal PathLabs.
नेटहेल्थ की नई नेतृत्व टीम घोषित

पुणे, सं. भारत की स्वास्थ्य सेवा संस्था सेवा नेटहेल्थ ने वर्ष 2019-20 के लिए अपनी नई नेतृत्व टीम की घोषणा की। मणिपाल हेल्थ एंटरप्राइज प्राइवेट लिमिटेड की मणिपाल हॉस्पिटल के अध्यक्ष डॉ. सुदर्शन बल्लाल को फेरोशेरके के अध्यक्ष के रूप में चुना गया है। वह श्री दलजीत सिंह, अध्यक्ष, नोर्सेस हेल्थकेयर लिमिटेड के उत्तराधिकारी हैं। डॉ. सुदर्शन बल्लाल ने नेटहेल्थ के निवर्तमान अध्यक्ष दलजीत सिंह को धन्यवाद दिया और राजित मेहता का विशेष उपाध्यक्ष-नेटहेल्थ के रूप में स्वागत किया, साथ ही नेटहेल्थ लीडरशिप टीम के अन्य सदस्यों - वायस प्रेसीडेंट-नेटहेल्थ के रूप में गीता रेड्डी, सचिव-नेटहेल्थ के रूप में डॉ. बन्नी अय्यार और कोपाध्यक्ष-नेटहेल्थ के रूप में डॉ. हर्ष महाजन को का स्वागत किया। सिद्धार्थ भट्टाचार्य, महासचिव, नेटहेल्थ, इस टीम के साथ फेरोशेरके का नेतृत्व करने, जिसका लक्ष्य भारत के स्वास्थ्य सेवा क्षेत्र के दीर्घकालिक विकास और स्थिरता के लिए एक मजबूत मंच तैयार करना है। उभरती प्राथमिकताओं पर बात करते हुए, नेटहेल्थ के अध्यक्ष, डॉ. सुदर्शन बल्लाल ने कहा, यह स्वास्थ्य सेवा के लिए वास्तव में अच्छा साल रहा है और इस वर्ष की घटनाएं निश्चित रूप से भारत में स्वास्थ्य सेवा के भविष्य का आकार देंगी।