FOCUS ON BETTER MEDICAL CARE, BOOST TO EDUCATION

WELLNESS No budgetary increase for Ayushman Bharat, but it got the biggest share of health allocation at ₹6,429 cr

Rhythma Kaul
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NEW DELHI: Health and family welfare was allocated ₹67,484 crore in the union budget 2020, a 3.8% increase over last year’s budgetary outlay of ₹64,999 crore.

Although there was no budgetary increase for the Narendra Modi government’s flagship health insurance scheme, Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (AB-PMJAY), it got the biggest share of the health allocation, receiving ₹6,429 crore for 2020-21.

“We have a holistic vision of healthcare that translates into wellness of the citizen. Mission Indradhanush has been expanded to cover 12 such diseases, including five new vaccines. Fit India movement is a vital part of the fight against non-communicable diseases coming out of lifestyle issues. A very focused approach (Jal Jeevan Mission) and comprehensive sanitation programme (Swachh Bharat Mission) have been launched to support the health vision. That would reduce the disease burden on the poor,” Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her budget speech.

The finance minister underlined the need to strengthen and build human resources in the public health sector. He also called for a better allocation of resources in metropolitan areas.

Budget 2020 has sharpened the focus on skilling and upgrading of medical human resources. Under the National Board of Examinations, large hospitals with sufficient capacity will be encouraged to train resident doctors in super-speciality courses. Bridge course for nurses and paramedics for equivalence with foreign courses will be designed by the health ministry and Skill Development together with professional bodies,” said Union health minister Harshvardhan.

There is a significant increase – from ₹4,733 crore in 2019-20 to ₹6,021 crore this year – for the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojna, which is the central scheme that deals with tertiary care hospitals, including new All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) or AIIMS-like hospitals, and medical education.

“The budget estimates for the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojna (PMSSY) which focuses on tertiary care hospitals, has been increased from ₹4,733 crore in 2019-20 to ₹6,021 crore in 2020-21, making it the single-largest component of the health budget. This is a significant increase of ₹1,288 crore, or 27.1%, from the previous year,” Harshvardhan said.

Policy think tank Niti Aayog’s proposal to allow private entities to run medical colleges attached to district hospitals under the public-private partnership (PPP) model found mention in the finance minister’s speech.

The PPP model is expected to help create robust health infrastructure, especially in underserved areas.

Apart from running medical colleges, the PPP model will also be used to create more hospitals in tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

“The government will provide viability gap funding (VGF) for the process,” said Sitharaman.

Using VGF to set up hospitals in 112 aspirational districts has been welcomed by industry. “It will help create robust health infrastructure especially in areas where Ayushman Bharat benefits have not reached yet, especially in the weaker section. We hope to see more investments in primary care and digital health to achieve the goal of Health for All,” said Sudarshan Ballal, president, NAIHEALTH, a healthcare industry body.

Sudarshan Jain, secretary general, Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance, said, “While the incentives in terms of using taxes on medical devices to build the healthcare ecosystem and additional hospitals in tier 2 and 3 are commendable, other initiatives, such as the New Export Incentive Scheme, are needed to really give India a competitive edge in the global healthcare market.”

The central allocation for crucial programmes such as the National Health Mission (₹34.390 crore to ₹34.156 crore) and National AIDS Control Programme (₹2,956 crore to ₹2,900 crore) remained almost the same.

The government-run Jan Aushadi stores that sell generic medicines at cheaper than market rates will be expanded to every district in the next four years, with improved number of medicines and surgical items, said the finance minister.

Dr K Hari Prasad, President, Apollo Group Hospitals, told news agency IANS that after many years, health care received significant importance in the budget. “Swachh Bharat, clean drinking water, improved nutrition for women & children, Fit India movement and wellness centres are great initiatives promoting wellness and are welcome,” he said.
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Although there was no budgetary increase for the Narendra Modi government's flagship health insurance scheme, Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (AB-PMJAY), it got the biggest share of the health allocation, receiving ₹6,429 cr for 2020-21.

“We have a holistic vision of healthcare that translates into wellness of the citizen. Mission Indradhanush has been expanded to cover 12 such diseases including five new vaccines. Fit India movement is a vital part of the fight against non-communicable diseases coming out of lifestyle issues. A very focused safe water (Jal Jeevan Mission) and comprehensive sanitation programme (Swachh Bharat Mission) have been launched to support the health vision. That would reduce the disease burden on the poor,” finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her budget speech.

The finance minister underlined the need to strengthen medical infrastructure and build human resources to improve the quality of medical colleges, especially at the district level, and increase the number of empanelled hospitals under the Ayushman Bharat scheme in tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

Around 26,000 hospitals are empanelled with AB-PMJAY, with the majority being in metropolises and state capitals.

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There is a significant increase – from ₹4,733 cr in 2019-20 to ₹6,020 cr this year – for the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojna, which is the central scheme that deals with tertiary care hospitals, including new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) or AIIMS-like hospitals, and medical education.

“The budget estimates for the department of health and family welfare show an appreciable increase of 3.75%, while there has been a 10% hike in the allocation for the department for health research. This indicates the government’s strong focus on the health sector,” said Harshvardhan.

Policy think tank Niti Aayog’s proposal to allow private entities for running medical colleges attached to district hospitals under the public private partnership (PPP) model found mention in the finance minister’s speech.

Following the National Health Policy document, Sitharaman stressed the need for public-private partnerships to help build hospitals and sustain health infrastructure in underserved areas.

Apart from running medical colleges, the PPP model will also be used to create more hospitals in tier-2 and tier-3 cities to be empanelled under the Ayushman Bharat scheme. “112 aspirational districts to get priority,” she said.

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The Union Health Ministry has been allocated ₹69,000 crore, inclusive of ₹6,400 crore for PM Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), to healthcare in Budget 2020-21. This marks an increase from last year's ₹62,659 crore.

Presenting the Budget, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that "presently, under PM Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), there are more than 20,000 empanelled hospitals. We need more in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities for poorer people under this scheme.

"It is proposed to set up Viability Gap funding window for setting up hospitals in the PPP mode. In the first phase, those aspirational districts will be covered, where presently there are no ayushman empanelled hospitals.

"This would also provide large scale employment opportunities to youth.

Proceeds from taxes on medical devices would be used to support this vital health infrastructure" said the Minister.

Acknowledging that TB remains a health challenge, the Minister said that health authorities and the medical fraternity can target disease with an appropriately designed preventive regime using machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI), in the Ayushman Bharat scheme.

Sitharaman said, "TB Harega Desh Jeetega campaign has been launched. I propose to strengthen these efforts towards our commitment to end Tuberculosis by 2025".

The Government has also plans to expand Jan Aushadhi Kendra Scheme to all districts offering 2,000 medicines and 300 surgicals by 2024.

Terming the Budget as 'landmark' budget, Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan said it aims to be built on three prominent and fundamental pillars of an aspirational India to boost the standard of living; economic development for all; and building a humane and compassionate society with Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas.

Apollo Hospitals Group Chairman Prathap C Reddy said that in addition to initiatives announced to improve access to medical care across the nation and boost human health resources, it was encouraging that vital determinant of good health which includes wellness, nutrition, clean drinking water, and sanitation were at the forefront of this Budget.

NATHEALTH President H Sudarshan Ballal welcomed the Government's priority on capacity building by improving health infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas.
New Delhi, Feb. 1: The healthcare industry on Saturday welcomed the initiatives announced by the government in the budget to improve the access to medical care across the nation. "Budget 2020 is a definitive step forward in the government of India's commitment to making India healthier and a model for the world to emulate," Apollo Hospitals group chairman Prathap C. Reddy said. In addition to initiatives announced to improve access to medical care across the nation and boost human health resources, it was encouraging that vital determinant of good health which includes wellness, nutrition, clean drinking water, and sanitation were at the forefront of this Budget, he added. Calling it a farsighted budget, Dr Reddy said the finance minister has announced "innovative initiatives that will enhance ease of living, improve the health quotient and boost opportunities for education and job creation, for all sections of our society and meet the expectations of an aspirational India." In similar vein, NATHED president H. Sudarshan Ballal said the budget accorded priority on capacity building by improving health infrastructure in tier II & III cities and rural areas. "Setting up hospitals on private public partnership with the provision of viability gap funding in 112 aspirational districts in the country go a long way in creating a robust health infrastructure especially in areas where Ayushman Bharat benefits have not yet reached especially to the weaker section," he added. Calling it a directionally sound budget, Biocon chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw said: "I am happy to see the government's focus on reviving economic growth."
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MHA gets ₹1.67 lakh crore

New Delhi (PTI): The Union Home Ministry was allocated ₹1.67,250 crore for the next fiscal with a special emphasis on police forces and works related to Census 2021. This allocation of the home ministry budget includes funds earmarked for the new Union Territories (UTs) like the newly created Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh, which were given Rs 30,767 crore and Rs 3,906 crore respectively, according to the Union budget presented in the Lok Sabha on Saturday by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

As for the works for the Census 2021 has begun, the government has allocated Rs 4,365 crore under the Census Surveys and Statistics head. The housing census of the Census and the National Population Register will be carried out from April 1 to September 30, 2020. The Census will have its reference date as March 1, 2021, but for snow-bound Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, it will be October 1, 2020. The Union Cabinet has already approved Rs 3,941.35 crore for the NPR exercise. The Budget allocated ₹1,126.62 crore for relief on account...
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The proposed amendments to the Companies Act for removing criminal action in case of tax disputes is a step towards infusing trust among India Inc, she added.

The use of Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence for preventive healthcare along with increasing the number of Jan Aushadhi Kendras will take forward the government's agenda of healthcare for all, she added.

"The measures announced in this Budget can give returns in the medium to long-term. However, we need to make sure they are implemented fast to have immediate impact. Overall a satisfactory budget," Mazumdar-Shaw said.

Highlighting that budget was prepared in difficult Economic scenario, Aster DM Healthcare founder chairman Azad Moopen said the Union Budget has managed to create opportunities for growth within limited resources.

"Eradication of tuberculosis in the country by the year 2025 is a great step towards healthier India," he added.

"There is proposal for viability fund gap support for hospitals in Tier 2 and 3 cities for meeting the requirement for Ayushman Bharat. This will give more accessibility to the people in the smaller cities and villages," Moopen said.

However, it is unfortunate that the allocation of Rs 69,000 crore for the sector is only just 1 per cent of GDP which will be highly inadequate for any major leap forward in the sector, he added.

Applauding the announcement providing boost to the domestic medical device sector, Association of Indian Medical Device Industry (AiMeD) Forum Coordinator Rajiv Nath said: "Finally we may have something to help address over Rs 38,837 crore, 80-90 per cent import dependent Indian Medical Devices Sector."

It's an excellent idea to tax imports of medical devices to fund the capacity building of healthcare delivery in public healthcare and with twin advantage of accelerating medical devices manufacturing as a Make in India enabler so that Indian national healthcare security concerns are addressed, he added.

Deloitte India, Partner, Lead- Life Science and Health Care Charu Sehgal said "the budget 2020 has continued with the healthcare themes announced in 2018 but has not made any significant increase in allocation or incentives."

The overall allocation has increased marginally to Rs 69,000 crore from 63,000 crore last year. "We will be nowhere closer to the long awaited target of 2.5 per cent of GDP," she added.
"The budget is focused on the holistic vision of healthcare, which proposes to provide Rs 69,000 crore that includes Rs 35,600 crore for nutrition related programs for 2020-21, and the same will enable to reduce pre-term death and malnutrition in society," Paras Healthcare COO Shankar Narang said.

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In Budget 2020-21, health sector allocations witness 8% jump

Health infrastructure upgradation has been the focus this year, with many announcements made by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman meant to improve the quality of medical colleges, especially at the district level, and also to increase the number of hospitals empanelled under the Ayushman Bharat scheme.

With about Rs 69,000 crore allocated to the health sector, there has been an increase of about 8% in the health budget as compared to the previous year, in this year’s Budget.

Even though the Modi government’s flagship health insurance scheme—Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (AB-PMJAY) didn’t see any budgetary increase this year, it still gets about Rs 6,400 crore of the total amount assigned to the health sector.
Health Infrastructure upgradation has been the focus this year, with many announcements made by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman meant to improve the quality of medical colleges, especially at the district level, and also to increase the number of hospitals empanelled under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, especially in the tier 2 and tier 3 cities.

There are about 20,000 hospitals empanelled under the scheme currently.

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Following the National Health Policy document, the government is open to making use of the private sector to help build and sustain health infrastructure in the country.

The government thinktank Niti Aayog's proposal to allow private players to run medical colleges attached to District Hospitals under the public private partnership (PPP) model also found mention in the finance minister's speech.

Apart from running medical colleges, the PPP model will also be used to create more hospitals in tier 2 and tier 3 cities to be empanelled under the Ayushman Bharat scheme.“112 aspirational districts to get priority,” she said.

Setting up hospitals on Private Public Partnership with the provision of Viability Gap Funding (VGF) in 112 aspirational districts in the country got a thumbs up from the industry.

“It will go a long way in creating robust health infrastructure especially in areas where Ayushman Bharat benefits have not reached yet especially to the weaker section. We hope to see more investments in primary care and digital health to achieve the goal of Health for All,” said NATHEALTH President H Sudarshan Ballal.
“While this is a welcome move, we should earmark direct infrastructure funds and not tax medical equipment which are essential components for affordable healthcare, Private sector investments can supplement these efforts and sustainable and viable financing can be developed which leads to an expansion of the demand pool for preventive, curative and rehabilitative health services. Increase in deposit insurance, lower individual rates for middle class and change in dividend tax are welcome steps that will boost overall sector confidence,” he added.

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However, the central allocation for the National Health Mission saw a marginal drop this year from Rs 34290 crore to Rs 34115 crore.
Budget: Healthcare industry welcomes govt's move to improve access to medical care

3 min read . Updated: 01 Feb 2020, 05:42 PM IST
PTI

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Healthcare Honchos upbeat about Union Budget 2020 announcements for health

‘Dil Mange More’ as well for making Healthcare for All a reality

February 1, 2020

New Delhi: Healthcare leaders generally have given thumbs up to announcements for health in Union Budget 2020. But they have offered many suggestions for action as well.

Dr. H Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH says, 'Union Budget 2020-21 has accorded priority on capacity building by improving health infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas. It is promising to note that the government paid serious attention to NATHEALTH’s recommendations on capacity building in these areas. Setting up hospitals on Private Public Partnership with the provision of Viability Gap Funding (VGF) in 112 aspirational districts in the country go a long way in creating a robust health infrastructure especially in that areas where Ayushman Bharat benefits have not reached yet especially to the weaker section. We hope to see more investments into primary care and digital health to achieve the goal of Health for All. While this is a welcome move, we should earmark direct infrastructure funds and not tax medical equipment which are essential components for affordable healthcare, Private sector investments can supplement these efforts of sustainable and viable financing can be developed which leads to an expansion of the demand pool for preventive, curative and rehabilitative health services. Increase in deposit insurance, lower individual rates for middle class and change in dividend tax are welcome steps that will boost overall sector confidence".
‘Union Budget manifests a holistic vision for healthcare. Provisions for a higher budgetary allocation is positive but in real terms, increase in health spend is just about the same as GDP growth. Hence, there is no increase in share and we will need to scale it up in future to reach 2.5 percent of GDP. However, push to new technology such as Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Technology ‘Data Centre Path’ and ‘Digital Connect,’ and enhanced Mission Indradhanush to cover new diseases and vaccines are in sync with the sector’s expectations and will go a long way to achieve the goal of Universal Health Coverage. We welcome healthcare infra being considered under the ambit of new infrastructure push and creation of a “Make in India” program to boost manufacturing of medical equipments and localization of the manufacturing and innovation value chain, ” Added Siddhartha Bhattacharya Secretary General, NATHEALTH.

Expressing his satisfaction over Union Budget 2020, Dr. Prathap C Reddy, Chairman, Apollo Hospitals Group said, ‘A farsighted budget, it is commendable that the Hon'ble Finance Minister has announced innovative initiatives that will enhance ease of living, improve the health quotient and boost opportunities for education & job creation, for all sections of our society and meet the expectations of an aspirational India.

Dr Reddy further says, ‘In the present day, an evolving healthcare ecosystem is being defined by new challenges. As the Hon'ble Finance Minister said, by 2030, India will have the largest working age population in the world and therefore, more than ever before, addressing Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) must be India’s immediate imperative as the prevalence of these diseases is being witnessed increasingly in the younger segment of our population. NCDs are responsible for two-thirds of the total morbidity burden and according to the World Economic Forum, by 2030, the world could lose over 30 trillion dollars and about 36 million people could die every year due to NCDs if rapid remedial action is not taken up. Hence in addition to initiatives announced to improve access to medical care across the nation and boost human health resources, it was encouraging that vital determinants of good health which include wellness, nutrition, clean drinking water and sanitation were at the forefront of this Budget. Likewise, the ‘Fit India’ programme championed by our Hon'ble Prime Minister personally, will certainly motivate a greater focus on fitness amongst Indian citizens.

Furthermore, we are hopeful that in the near future, a nationwide health screening programme for all citizens is initiated, which would empower every Indian with awareness about their health status and help them make lifestyle changes as needed. This is critical to prevent, avoidable mortalities.

Budget 2020 is a definitive step forward in the Government of India’s commitment to make India healthier and a model for the world to emulate.”
Dr Azad Founder Chairman & Managing Director, Aster DM Healthcare, says, ‘The Union Budget, prepared in difficult Economic scenario has managed to create opportunities for growth within limited resources. It is good to see that Finance Minister has provided some benefits in the union budget for the Healthcare sector:

1. Eradication of Tuberculosis in the country by the year 2025 is a great step towards healthier India
2. There is proposal for viability fund gap support for hospitals in Tier 2 and 3 cities for meeting the requirement for Ayushman Bharat. This will give more accessibility to the people in the smaller cities and villages.
3. The proposal to have PPP model hospitals in 112 aspirational districts will again increase the accessibility for healthcare to marginalized population

However, it is unfortunate that the allocation of 60000 CR for the sector is only just 1% of GDP which will be highly inadequate for any major leap forward in the sector.

The budget is almost silent regarding NRIs and many of the demands and suggestions to benefit them have not been considered.

Reacting on the 2020-21 budget, Dr. Swadoep Srivastava, Founder & Mentor of HEAL HEALTH CONNECT SOLUTIONS — which stands out to be a leading organisation in India to provide comprehensive, knowledge-based communication solutions for healthcare brands, said, “The allocation of Rs 69,000 crore, inclusive of Rs 6,400 crore for Jan Arogya Yojana, to healthcare in Budget 2020-21, marks an increase from last year that will add a bountiful slice, bringing long breathing to the healthcare landscape in India. Also, the plan to expand the AB-PMJAY Yojana to set up more hospitals in the tier-II and III cities under the Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) model will bring efficiency in overall healthcare delivery, paving the way to create more employment opportunities to the professionally skilled work-force. Moreover, the expansion of the Jan Aushadhi scheme may further dent the branded generic medicines market in India as these medicines are cheaper than branded ones by at least 50 per cent. Indeed, these steps are laudable enough to salvage the state of potentially struggling healthcare of the country, thereby giving a gentle boost to the healthcare industry — the much-needed impetus.”

Dr Raajiv Singhal, Group CEO of Care Hospitals, says, ‘We welcome the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman’s emphasis on healthcare as a key agenda, and acknowledging the need to expand healthcare delivery beyond the metros and cities to Tier 2 and 3 towns. While the outlay for healthcare has been increased from INR 62659 crore last year to INR 69000 crore, we still have a long way to cover to achieve at least 2.5% of the GDP on healthcare spend.’
Healthcare industry welcomes government’s initiatives on medical care

New Delhi: The healthcare industry Saturday welcomed the initiatives announced by the government in Budget 2020-21 to improve the access to medical care across the nation.

“Budget 2020 is a definitive step forward in the Government of India’s commitment to making India healthier and a model for the world to emulate,” Apollo Hospitals Group chairman Prathap C Reddy said.

“In addition to initiatives announced to improve access to medical care across the nation and boost human health resources, it is encouraging that vital determinant of good health which includes wellness, nutrition, clean drinking water, and sanitation were at the forefront of this Budget,” Reddy added.

Calling it a farsighted budget, Reddy said the finance minister has announced ‘innovative initiatives that will enhance ease of living, improve the health quotient and boost opportunities for education and job creation, for all sections of our society and meet the expectations of an aspirational India’.

‘NATHEALTH’ president H Sudarshan Ballal said the budget accorded priority on capacity building by improving health infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas.
“Setting up hospitals on private public partnership with (PPP) the provision of viability gap funding in 112 aspirational districts in the country go a long way in creating a robust health infrastructure especially in areas where Ayushman Bharat benefits have not yet reached especially to the weaker section,” stated Ballal.

Calling it a directionally sound budget, Biocon Chairperson & MD Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw said: “I am happy to see the government’s focus on reviving economic growth.”

“The proposed amendments to the Companies Act for removing criminal action in case of tax disputes is a step towards infusing trust among India Inc,” Mazumdar-Shaw said.

“The measures announced in this Budget can give returns in the medium to long-term. However, we need to make sure they are implemented fast to have immediate impact. Overall a satisfactory budget,” Mazumdar-Shaw added.

Highlighting that the budget was prepared in a difficult economic scenario, ‘Aster DM Healthcare’ founder chairman Azad Moopen said the Union Budget has managed to create opportunities for growth within limited resources.

“Eradication of tuberculosis in the country by the year 2025 is a great step towards healthier India,” said Moopen.

“There is proposal for viability fund gap support for hospitals in Tier 2 and 3 cities for meeting the requirement for Ayushman Bharat. This will give more accessibility to the people in the smaller cities and villages,” Moopen pointed out.

However, it is unfortunate that the allocation of Rs 69,000 crore for the sector is only just one per cent of GDP which will be highly inadequate for any major leap forward in the sector, added Moopen.

Deloitte India, Partner, Lead- Life Science and Health Care Charu Sehgal said that ‘the budget 2020 has continued with the healthcare themes announced in 2018 but has not made any significant increase in allocation or incentives’.

“The overall allocation has increased marginally to Rs 69,000 crore from 63,000 crore last year. We will be nowhere closer to the long awaited target of 2.5 per cent of GDP,” added Sehgal.

“The budget is focused on the holistic vision of healthcare, which proposes to provide Rs 69,000 crore that includes Rs 35,600 crore for nutrition related programs for 2020-21, and the same will enable to reduce pre-term death and malnutrition in society,” Paras Healthcare COO Shankar Narang said.
Healthcare industry welcomes govt's move to improve access to medical care in Budget

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In similar vein, NATHEALTH President H Sudarshan Ballal said the budget accorded priority on capacity building by improving health infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas.

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The proposed amendments to the Companies Act for removing criminal action in case of tax disputes is a step towards infusing trust among India Inc, she added.
The use of Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence for preventive healthcare along with increasing the number of Jan Aushadhi Kendras will take forward the government's agenda of healthcare for all, she added.

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However, it is unfortunate that the allocation of Rs 69,000 crore for the sector is only just 1 per cent of GDP which will be highly inadequate for any major leap forward in the sector, he added.

Applauding the announcement providing boost to the domestic medicial device sector, Association of Indian Medical Device Industry (AiMeD) Forum Coordinator Rajiv Nath said:
"Finally we may have something to help address over Rs 38,837 crore, 80-90 per cent import dependent Indian Medical Devices Sector."

It's an excellent idea to tax imports of medical devices to fund the capacity building of healthcare delivery in public healthcare and with twin advantage of accelerating medical devices manufacturing as a Make in India enabler so that Indian national healthcare security concerns are addressed, he added.

Deloitte India, Partner, Lead- Life Science and Health Care Charu Sehgal said "the budget 2020 has continued with the healthcare themes announced in 2018 but has not made any significant increase in allocation or incentives."

The overall allocation has increased marginally to Rs 69,000 crore from 63,000 crore last year. "We will be nowhere closer to the long awaited target of 2.5 per cent of GDP," she added.

"The budget is focused on the holistic vision of healthcare, which proposes to provide Rs 69,000 crore that includes Rs 35,600 crore for nutrition related programs for 2020-21, and the same will enable to reduce pre-term death and malnutrition in society," Paras Healthcare COO Shankar Narang said. PTI AKT DRR
New Delhi, Feb 1 (IANS) India's medical devices industry on Friday welcomed Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's move to impose a health cess of 5 per cent on imports of specified medical equipment to give an impetus to the domestic industry and to generate resources for health services.

"India is now making world class goods and exporting such products. We have made considerable progress in medical equipment, too. Till a few years back, we were dependent on imports for medical equipment. Now, not only we are manufacturing medical equipment but also exporting them in large quantities. This sector deserves further fillip," Sitharaman said in her second Union Budget presentation in Parliament.

The health cess will be imposed on imports of medical devices, except those exempt from BCD (basic customs duty).

"To achieve the twin objectives of giving impetus to the domestic industry and also to generate resource for health services, I propose to impose a nominal health cess, by way of a duty of customs, on the imports of medical equipment keeping in view that these goods are now being made significantly in India," she added.

The Indian medical devices industry has responded positively to the proposals in the Budget.

"Finally we may have something to help address over Rs 38,837 crore, 80-90 per cent import dependent Indian medical devices sector," Rajiv Nath, Forum Coordinator of Association of Indian Medical Device Industry (AiMeD), said in a statement.

AiMeD is an Umbrella Association of Indian Manufacturers of Medical Devices covering all types of Medical Devices including Consumables, Disposables, Equipments, Instruments, Electronics, Diagnostics and Implants.
According to the Finance Minister, the proposed scheme to encourage manufacture of mobile phones and ships can be adapted for manufacture of medical devices too with suitable modifications.

"It's an excellent idea to tax imports of medical devices to fund the capacity building of healthcare delivery in public healthcare and with twin advantage of accelerating medical devices manufacturing as a "Make in India" enabler so that Indian national healthcare security concerns are addressed -- the inadequacy of which is being exposed in ongoing crisis to address the coronavirus epidemic preparedness," Nath added.

Healthcare industry body NATHEALTH also welcomed the move.

"We welcome healthcare infra being considered under the ambit of new infrastructure push and creation of a "Make in India" programme to boost manufacturing of medical equipments and localization of the manufacturing and innovation value chain," said Siddhartha Bhattacharya, Secretary General, NATHEALTH.
Healthcare experts hail Union Budget 2020

— February 1, 2020

BS RAWAT

NEW DELHI: The push to the health sector in Union Budget 2020 has been hailed by healthcare industry but they expressed mixed reactions on insufficient increases in the budget. Here are some of the reactions.

NATHEALTH President Dr. H Sudarshan Ballal said, "Setting up hospitals on Private Public Partnership with the provision of Viability Gap Funding (VGF) in 112 aspirational districts in the country go a long way in creating a robust health infrastructure especially in the areas where Ayushman Bharat benefits have not reached yet, especially to the weaker section."

He stated, "While more investments into primary care and digital health is a welcome move, we should earmark direct infrastructure funds and not tax medical equipment which are essential components for affordable healthcare, Private sector investments can supplement these efforts of sustainable and viable financing can be developed which leads to an expansion of the demand pool for preventive, curative and rehabilitative health services."

“We welcome healthcare infra being considered under the ambit of new infrastructure push and creation of a “Make in India” program to boost manufacturing of medical equipments and localization of the manufacturing and innovation value chain,” said Siddhartha Bhattacharya Secretary General, NATHEALTH.

Mr Rajiv Nath, Forum Coordinator, Association of Indian Medical Device Industry (AiMeD), said, “Finally, we may have something to help address over Rs 38,837 crore, 80-90% import dependent Indian Medical Devices Sector. It’s an excellent idea to tax imports of medical devices to fund the capacity building of healthcare delivery in public
healthcare.”

Dr. Somesh Mittal, Managing Director & CEO, Vikram Hospital Bengaluru said, “20,000 empanelled hospitals under Ayushman Bharat will help lakhs of poor and middle class people and this initiative of the government is a welcome move. PPP mode hospitals planned to be set up in 112 districts will further empower the poor and under privileged to avail medical services. Overall, a good budget from the healthcare sector perspective.”

Dr. Babit Kumar, Radiologist, Motherland Hospital, Noida, stated, “We are pleased with the increased coverage announced under the PMJAY, which seeks to improve access to quality healthcare and insurance in Tier II and III cities as well. The FM has also addressed the shortage of qualified doctors, a major concern for the healthcare segment, and announced setting up new hospitals with tax generated from the sale of medical devices, which is a welcome move.”

Mr. Anuj Gulati, MD & CEO, Religare Health Insurance, pointed out, “The government’s vision across various healthcare initiatives such as Ayushman Bharat, Mission Indradhanush and the Jan Aushadhi scheme will give desired impetus to the sector and also increase access to quality healthcare services. Tax benefit proposals will significantly benefit the middle class comprising of self-employed, small businesses, traders, salaried class, pensioners and senior citizens.”

Mr Rashie Jain, CEO & CO-founder of Onco.com, said, “Extending Jan Arogya Yojana to bring more underprivileged within the insurance ambit will go a long way towards ensuring better healthcare and treatment options. We are positive about the measures taken in the budget to make healthcare for all a priority.”
Budget 2020: Healthcare industry welcomes govt’s move to improve access to medical care in Budget

By: PTI | New Delhi | Published: February 1, 2020 6:23:02 PM

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Calling it a farsighted budget, Reddy said the Finance Minister has announced “innovative initiatives that will enhance ease of living, improve the health quotient and boost opportunities for education and job creation, for all sections of our society and meet the expectations of an aspirational India.” In similar vein, NATHEALTH President H Sudarshan Ballal said the budget accorded priority on capacity building by improving health infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas.
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“The measures announced in this Budget can give returns in the medium to long-term. However, we need to make sure they are implemented fast to have immediate impact. Overall a satisfactory budget,” Mazumdar-Shaw added.

Highlighting that the budget was prepared in a difficult economic scenario, ‘Aster DM Healthcare’ founder chairman Azad Moopen said the Union Budget has managed to create opportunities for growth within limited resources.
“Eradication of tuberculosis in the country by the year 2025 is a great step towards healthier India,” said Moopen. “There is proposal for viability fund gap support for hospitals in Tier 2 and 3 cities for meeting the requirement for Ayushman Bharat. This will give more accessibility to the people in the smaller cities and villages,” Moopen pointed out.

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FICCI & NATHEALTH to jointly strengthen healthcare systems

12 February 2020 | News

The MoU aims to provide a wider representation of the healthcare industry

L-R (Hony) Brig Dr Arvind Lal, Chair, FICCI Health Services with Dr H Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the healthcare industry body - Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) to jointly strengthen healthcare systems through Policy Advocacy & Public-Private-Partnerships.
The MoU aims to provide a wider representation of the healthcare industry to key stakeholders in areas of policymaking and creating a suitable environment to benefit all stakeholders.

Under the agreement, two apex industry bodies intent to co-operate and focus their efforts on creating and implementing policies that help build trust, share knowledge and resource and create commercial opportunities for the mutual benefit of its members.

Through this collaboration, FICCI and NATHEALTH have identified five major areas of collaboration viz. Policy Advocacy, Public-private partnership, Recommending financial models, Patient Charter and Capacity Building. They have also agreed to develop a common minimum agenda for the year, aligned to national healthcare goals and work towards getting the government’s support in taking this agenda forward.

(Hony) Brig Dr Arvind Lal, Chair, FICCI Health Services, while signing the MoU said, “FICCI has set up several Task Forces to recommend measures for strengthening number of specialist doctors, pricing and accountability in healthcare and bridging the trust deficit. Through this collaboration both FICCI and NATHEALTH would be able to present a unified voice for the healthcare industry in critical areas such as capacity building, quality and Patient Charter.”

Dr H Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH said, “We have common interest and objectives. We will establish channels of communication and co-operation that will promote and advance the objectives of the members through common dialogue and representation. NATHEALTH, in association with FICCI, will formulate joint representations on behalf of the members on matters relating to successful implementation of government’s program under National Health Mission including AB-PMJAY.”

Capacity building in Tier II & III cities is a priority for the government and the industry is committed to extending all its support.

Dr Lal added that, “while we would work towards capacity creation in smaller cities and recommend locations that are best suited for the government to initiate public-private partnerships, we will also explore sustainable PPP/philanthropic/CSR models for efficient running of the 150,000 HWCs under Ayushman Bharat for imparting quality primary healthcare, control of NCDs and availability of high quality diagnostics.”

FICCI and NATHEALTH will work together in recommending reference cost structure for building and operating hospitals in non-metro locations and suggesting models for revenue and costing that meets the ‘inclusive healthcare’ objective of the government.
FICCI-NATHELATH to boost healthcare systems through policy advocacy, PPP

The MoU aims to provide a wider representation of the healthcare industry to key stakeholders in areas of policymaking and creating a suitable environment to benefit all stakeholders.

FICCI signed an MoU with the healthcare industry body Healthcare Federation of India (NATHELATH) today to jointly strengthen healthcare systems through policy advocacy and public-private-partnerships.

Speaking at the MoU signing ceremony, (Hony) Brig Dr. Arvind Lal, Chair, FICCI Health
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FICCI signs MoU with NATHEALTH

Will formulate a patient charter to help create awareness and build trust between patients and hospitals

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Through this collaboration, FICCI and NATHEALTH have identified five major areas of collaboration viz. policy advocacy, public-private partnership, recommending financial models, patient charter and capacity building. They have also agreed to develop a common minimum agenda for the year, aligned to national healthcare goals and work towards getting the government’s support in taking this agenda forward.
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FICCI Signs MoU With Healthcare Federation of India To Strengthen Healthcare Systems

Capital Market
Last Updated at February 12, 2020 16:04 IST

FICCI signed an MoU with healthcare industry body Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) to jointly strengthen healthcare systems through policy advocacy and public-private-partnerships. Speaking at the MoU signing ceremony, Arvind Lal, Chair, FICCI Health Services, said that FICCI has set up several task forces to recommend measures for strengthening number of specialist doctors, pricing and accountability in healthcare and bridging the trust deficit. Through this collaboration both FICCI and NATHEALTH would be able to present a unified voice for the healthcare industry in critical areas such as capacity building, quality and Patient Charter”.

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Through this collaboration, FICCI and NATHEALTH have identified five major areas of collaboration viz. Policy Advocacy, Public-private partnership, Recommending financial models, Patient Charter and Capacity Building. They have also agreed to develop a common minimum agenda for the year, aligned to national healthcare goals and work towards getting the government's support in taking this agenda forward.

Capacity building in Tier II and III cities is a priority for the government and the industry is committed to extending all its support. FICCI and NATHEALTH will work together in recommending reference cost structure for building and operating hospitals in non-metro locations and suggesting models for revenue and costing that meets the 'inclusive healthcare' objective of the government.

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FICCI & NATHEALTH Sign MoU To Jointly Strengthen Healthcare Systems & Public-Private-Partnerships

Apex Industry bodies will work together for formulating a model arrangement for active participation of private hospitals in health programs launched by the government and creating a reference document for public-private partnership
The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the leading industry body, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the healthcare industry body - Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) to jointly strengthen healthcare systems through Policy Advocacy & Public-Private-Partnerships. The MoU aims to provide a wider representation of the healthcare industry to key stakeholders in areas of policymaking and creating a suitable environment to benefit all stakeholders.

Under the agreement, two apex industry bodies intent to co-operate and focus their efforts on creating and implementing policies that help build trust, share knowledge and resource and create commercial opportunities for the mutual benefit of its members.

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Brig Dr Arvind Lal, Chair, FICCIHealth Services, while signing the MoU said, “FICCI has set up several Task Forces to recommend measures for strengthening a number of specialist doctors, pricing and accountability in healthcare and bridging the trust deficit. Through this collaboration, both FICCI and NATHEALTH would be able to present a unified voice for the healthcare industry in critical areas such as capacity building, quality and Patient Charter”.

“We have common interests and objectives. We will establish channels of communication and co-operation that will promote and advance the objectives of the members through common dialogue and representation. NATHEALTH, in association with FICCI, will formulate joint representations on behalf of the members on matters relating to the successful implementation of government’s program under National Health Mission including AB-PMJAY,” said Dr H Sudarshan Ballal, President, NATHEALTH.

Capacity building in Tier II & III cities is a priority for the government and the industry is committed to extending all its support. FICCI and NATHEALTH will work together in recommending reference cost structure for building and operating hospitals in non-metro locations and suggesting models for revenue and costing that meets the ‘inclusive healthcare’ objective of the government.

Dr Lal added that “while we would work towards capacity creation in smaller cities and recommend locations that are best suited for the government to initiate public-private partnerships, we will also explore sustainable PPP/philanthropic/CSR models for efficient running of the 150,000 HWCs under Ayushman Bharat for imparting quality primary healthcare, control of NCDs and availability of high-quality diagnostics”.
FICCI-NATHEALTH sign MoU to strengthen healthcare systems

Through this collaboration, FICCI and NATHEALTH have identified five major areas of collaboration viz. policy advocacy, public-private partnership, recommending financial models, patient charter and capacity building.

New Delhi: The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with healthcare industry body-Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) today to jointly strengthen healthcare systems through policy advocacy and public-private-partnerships.

Speaking at the MoU signing ceremony, (Hony) Brig Dr Arvind Lal, Chair, FICCI Health Services, said, “FICCI has set up several task forces to recommend measures for strengthening number of specialist doctors, pricing and accountability in healthcare and bridging the trust deficit. Through this collaboration both FICCI and NATHEALTH would be able to present a unified voice for the healthcare industry in critical areas such as capacity building, quality and patient charter”.

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FICCI & NATHEALTH Sign MoU to jointly Strengthen Healthcare Systems & Public-Private Partnerships

By Sahil Saini / 50 mins ago / News Update / No Comments

- FICCI and NATHEALTH will work together for formulating a model arrangement for active participation of private hospitals in health programs launched by the government and creating a reference document for public-private partnership
- Apex Industry bodies join hands to formulate a Patient Charter that
helps create awareness and builds trust between patients and hospitals

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FICCI & NATHEALTH Sign MoU to jointly strengthen Healthcare Systems & Public-Private-Partnerships

*Industry bodies will formulate Patient Charter to build trust between patients and hospitals*

February 12, 2020
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FICCI-NATHEALTH sign MoU to strengthen healthcare systems

New Delhi: FICCI signed an MoU with healthcare industry body Healthcare Federation of India (NATHEALTH) today to jointly strengthen healthcare systems through policy advocacy and public-private-partnerships.

Speaking at the MoU signing ceremony, (Hony) Brig Dr Arvind Lal, Chair, FICCI Health Services, said, “FICCI has set up several task forces to recommend measures for strengthening number of specialist doctors, pricing and accountability in healthcare and bridging the trust deficit. Through this collaboration both FICCI and NATHEALTH would be able to present a unified voice for the healthcare industry in critical areas such as capacity building, quality and Patient Charter”.

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FICCI Signs MoU With Healthcare Federation Of India To Strengthen Healthcare Systems

February 13, 2020

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*Business Standard*
Health cos quite happy

New Delhi, Feb. 1: The healthcare industry on Saturday welcomed the initiatives announced by the government in the budget to improve the access to medical care across the nation. “Budget 2020 is a definitive step forward in the government of India’s commitment to making India healthier and a model for the world to emulate,” Apollo Hospitals group chairman Prathap C. Reddy said. In addition to initiatives announced to improve access to medical care across the nation and boost human health resources, it was encouraging that vital determinant of good health which includes wellness, nutrition, clean drinking water, and sanitation were at the forefront of this Budget, he added. Calling it a farsighted budget, Dr Reddy said the finance minister has announced “innovative initiatives that will enhance ease of living, improve the health quotient and boost opportunities for education and job creation, for all sections of our society and meet the expectations of an aspirational India.” In similar vein, NATHEALTH president H. Sudarshan Ballal said the budget accorded priority on capacity building by improving health infrastructure in tier II & III cities and rural areas. “Setting up hospitals on private public partnership with the provision of viability gap funding in 112 aspirational districts in the country go a long way in creating a robust health infrastructure especially in areas where Ayushman Bharat benefits have not yet reached especially to the weaker section,” he added. Calling it a directionally sound budget,
Budget 2020: Focus on better medical care, boost to education

Although there was no budgetary increase for the Narendra Modi government's flagship health insurance scheme, Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (AB-PMJAY), it got the biggest share of the health allocation, receiving Rs 6,429 crore for 2020-21.

Health and family welfare was allocated Rs 67,484 crore in the union budget 2020, a 3.8% increase over last year's budgetary outlay of Rs 64,999 crore.
“We have a holistic vision of healthcare that translates into wellness of the citizen. Mission Indradhanush has been expanded to cover 12 such diseases, including five new vaccines. Fit India movement is a vital part of the fight against non-communicable diseases coming out of lifestyle issues. A very focused safe water (Jal Jeevan Mission) and comprehensive sanitation programme (Swachh Bharat Mission) have been launched to support the health vision. That would reduce the disease burden on the poor,” finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her budget speech.

The finance minister underlined the need to strengthen medical infrastructure and build human resources to improve the quality of medical colleges, especially at the district level, and increase the number of empanelled hospitals under the Ayushman Bharat scheme in tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

Around 20,000 hospitals are empanelled with AB-PMJAY, with the majority being in metropolises and state capitals.

“Budget 2020 has sharpened the focus on skilling and upgradation of medical human resources. Under the National Board of Examinations, large hospitals with sufficient capacity will be encouraged to train resident doctors in super-speciality courses. Bridge course for nurses and paramedics for equivalence with foreign courses will be designed by health ministry and Skill Development together with professional bodies,” said Union health minister Harshvardhan.

There is a significant increase – from Rs 4,733 crore in 2019–20 to Rs 6,020 crore this year -- for the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojna, which is the central scheme that deals with tertiary care hospitals, including new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) or AIIMS-like hospitals, and medical education.

“The budget estimates for the department of health and family welfare show an appreciable increase of 3.75%, while there has been a 10% hike in the allocation for the department for health research. This indicates the government’s strong focus on the health sector,” said Harshvardhan.

Policy think tank Niti Aayog’s proposal to allow private entities to run medical colleges attached to district hospitals under the public private partnership (PPP) model found mention in the finance minister’s speech.
Following the National Health Policy document, Sitharaman stressed the need for public-private partnerships to help build hospitals and sustain health infrastructure in underserved areas.

Apart from running medical colleges, the PPP model will also be used to create more hospitals in tier-2 and tier-3 cities to be empanelled under the Ayushman Bharat scheme. “112 aspirational districts to get priority,” she said.

“Proceeds from taxes on medical devices would be used for development of hospitals... The government will provide viability gap funding (VGF) for the process,” said Sitharaman.

Using VGF to set up hospitals in 112 aspirational districts has been welcomed by industry. “It will help create robust health infrastructure especially in areas where Ayushman Bharat benefits have not reached yet especially to the weaker section. We hope to see more investments in primary care and digital health to achieve the goal of Health for All,” said H Sudarshan Ballal, president, NATHEALTH, a healthcare industry body.

Sudarshan Jain, secretary general, Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance, said, “While the incentives in terms of using taxes on medical devices to build the health care ecosystem and additional hospitals in tier 2 and 5 are commendable, other initiatives, such as the New Export Incentive Scheme, are needed to really give India a competitive edge in the global health care market.”

The central allocation for crucial programmes such as the National Health Mission (Rs 34,290 crore to Rs 34,115 crore) and National AIDS Control Programme (Rs 2,956 crore to Rs 2,900 crore) remained almost the same.

The government-run Jan Aushadhi stores that sell generic medicines at cheaper than market rates will be expanded to every district in the next four years, with improved number of medicines and surgical items, said the finance minister.

Dr K Hari Prasad, President, Apollo Group Hospitals, told news agency IANS that after many years, health care received significant importance in the budget. “Swachch Bharat, clean drinking water, improved nutrition for women & children, Fit India movement and wellness centres are great initiatives promoting wellness and are welcome,” he said.
Healthcare industry welcomes government's move to improve access to medical care in Budget

The healthcare industry welcomed the initiatives announced by the government in Budget 2020-21 to improve the access to medical care across the nation.

By PTI

NEW DELHI: The healthcare industry on Saturday welcomed the initiatives announced by the government in Budget 2020-21 to improve the access to medical care across the nation.
"Budget 2020 is a definitive step forward in the Government of India's commitment to making India healthier and a model for the world to emulate," Apollo Hospitals Group Chairman Prathap C Reddy said.

In addition to initiatives announced to improve access to medical care across the nation and boost human health resources, it was encouraging that vital determinant of good health which includes wellness, nutrition, clean drinking water, and sanitation were at the forefront of this Budget, he added.

Calling it a farsighted budget, Reddy said the Finance Minister has announced "innovative initiatives that will enhance ease of living, improve the health quotient and boost opportunities for education and job creation, for all sections of our society and meet the expectations of an aspirational India."

In similar vein, NATHALTH President II Sudarshan Ballal said the budget accorded priority on capacity building by improving health infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas.

"Setting up hospitals on private public partnership with the provision of viability gap funding in 112 Aspirational Districts in the country go a long way in creating a robust health infrastructure especially in areas where Ayushman Bharat benefits have not yet reached especially to the weaker section," he added.

Calling it a directionally sound Budget, Biocon Chairperson & MD Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw said: "I am happy to see the government's focus on reviving economic growth."

The proposed amendments to the Companies Act for removing criminal action in case of tax disputes is a step towards infusing trust among India Inc, she added. The use of Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence for preventive healthcare along with increasing the number of Jan Aushadhi Kendras will take forward the government's agenda of healthcare for all, she added.

"The measures announced in this Budget can give returns in the medium to long-term. However, we need to make sure they are implemented fast to have immediate impact. Overall a satisfactory budget," Mazumdar-Shaw said.
Highlighting that budget was prepared in difficult Economic scenario, Aster DM Healthcare founder chairman Azad Moopen said the Union Budget has managed to create opportunities for growth within limited resources.

"Eradication of tuberculosis in the country by the year 2025 is a great step towards healthier India," he added.

"There is proposal for viability fund gap support for hospitals in Tier 2 and 3 cities for meeting the requirement for Ayushman Bharat. This will give more accessibility to the people in the smaller cities and villages," Moopen said.

However, it is unfortunate that the allocation of Rs 69,000 crore for the sector is only just 1 per cent of GDP which will be highly inadequate for any major leap forward in the sector, he added.

Applauding the announcement providing boost to the domestic medical device sector, Association of Indian Medical Device Industry (AiMeD) Forum Coordinator Rajiv Nath said: "Finally we may have something to help address over Rs 38,837 crore, 80-90 per cent import dependent Indian Medical Devices Sector."

It's an excellent idea to tax imports of medical devices to fund the capacity building of healthcare delivery in public healthcare and with twin advantage of accelerating medical devices manufacturing as a Make in India enabler so that Indian national healthcare security concerns are addressed, he added.

Deloitte India, Partner, Lead- Life Science and Health Care Charu Sehgal said "the budget 2020 has continued with the healthcare themes announced in 2018 but has not made any significant increase in allocation or incentives."

The overall allocation has increased marginally to Rs 69,000 crore from 63,000 crore last year. "We will be nowhere closer to the long awaited target of 2.5 per cent of GDP," she added.

"The budget is focused on the holistic vision of healthcare, which proposes to provide Rs 69,000 crore that includes Rs 35,600 crore for nutrition related programs for 2020-21, and the same will enable to reduce pre-term death and malnutrition in society," Paras Healthcare COO Shankar Narang said.

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Industry Hails 5% Health Cess On Imports Of Medical Devices

New Delhi: India’s medical devices industry on Friday welcomed Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman’s move to impose a health cess of 5 per cent on imports of specified medical equipment to give an impetus to the domestic industry and to generate resources for health services.
“India is now making world class goods and exporting such products. We have made considerable progress in medical equipment, too. Till a few years back, we were dependent on imports for medical equipment. Now, not only we are manufacturing medical equipment but also exporting them in large quantities. This sector deserves further fillip,” Sitharaman said in her second Union Budget presentation in Parliament.

The health cess will be imposed on imports of medical devices, except those exempt from BCD (basic customs duty).

“To achieve the twin objectives of giving impetus to the domestic industry and also to generate resource for health services, I propose to impose a nominal health cess, by way of a duty of customs, on the imports of medical equipment keeping in view that these goods are now being made significantly in India,” she added.

The Indian medical devices industry has responded positively to the proposals in the Budget.

“Finally we may have something to help address over Rs 38,837 crore, 80-90 per cent import dependent Indian medical devices sector,” Rajiv Nath, Forum Coordinator of Association of Indian Medical Device Industry (AiMeD), said in a statement.

AiMeD is an Umbrella Association of Indian Manufacturers of Medical Devices covering all types of Medical Devices including Consumables, Disposables, Equipment, Instruments, Electronics, Diagnostics and Implants.

According to the Finance Minister, the proposed scheme to encourage the manufacture of mobile phones and ships can be adapted for the manufacture of medical devices too with suitable modifications.

“It’s an excellent idea to tax imports of medical devices to fund the
capacity building of healthcare delivery in public healthcare and with
twin advantage of accelerating medical devices manufacturing as a
‘Make in India’ enabler so that Indian national healthcare security
concerns are addressed – the inadequacy of which is being exposed
in ongoing crisis to address the coronavirus epidemic preparedness,”
Nath added.

Healthcare industry body NATHEALTH also welcomed the move.

“We welcome healthcare infra being considered under the ambit of
new infrastructure push and creation of a “Make in India” programme
to boost manufacturing of medical equipment and localization of the
manufacturing and innovation value chain,” said Siddhartha
Bhattacharya, Secretary General, NATHEALTH.
The Union Health Ministry has been allocated Rs 69,000 crore, inclusive of Rs 6,400 crore for PM Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), to healthcare in Budget 2020-21. This marks an increase from last year's Rs 62,659 crore.

Presenting the Budget, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that "presently, under PM Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) there are more than 20,000 empanelled hospitals. We need more in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities for poorer people under this scheme.

"It is proposed to set up Viability Gap funding window for setting up hospitals in the PPP mode. In the first phase, those aspirational districts will be covered, where presently there are no ayushman empanelled hospitals.

"This would also provide large scale employment opportunities to youth. Proceeds from taxes on medical devices would be used to support this vital health infrastructure" said the Minister.

Acknowledging that TB remains a health challenge, the Minister said that health authorities and the medical fraternity can target disease with an appropriately designed preventive regime using machine learning and artificial Intelligence (AI), in the Ayushman Bharat scheme.

Sitharaman said, "TB Harega Desh Jeetega campaign has been launched. I propose to strengthen these efforts towards our commitment to end Tuberculosis by 2025".

The Government has also plans to expand Jan Aushadhi Kendra Scheme to all districts offering 2,000 medicines and 300 surgicals by 2024.

Terming the Budget as 'landmark' budget, Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan said it aims to be built on three prominent and fundamental pillars of an aspirational India to boost the standard of living; economic development for all; and building a humane and compassionate society with Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas.
Apollo Hospitals Group Chairman Prathap C Reddy said that in addition to initiatives announced to improve access to medical care across the nation and boost human health resources, it was encouraging that vital determinant of good health which includes wellness, nutrition clean drinking water, and sanitation were at the forefront of this Budget.

NATHEALTH President H Sudarshan Ballal welcomed the Government's priority on capacity building by improving health infrastructure in Tier II & III cities and rural areas.
Govt. urged to withdraw cess on Med Tech customs duties

— February 4, 2020

BS RAWAT

NEW DELHI: Apex Healthcare Industry body NATHEALTH has urged the Central government to withdraw imposition of a cess on customs duties for import of Medical Technologies.

NATHEALTH pointed out that ‘Make in India’ program has to be built on a broader vision that builds demand and supply-side incentives through a longer-term policy framework to spur long term investments.

According to a NATHEALTH statement, “While there is a stated need to build new infrastructure, India should earmark direct infrastructure funds out of Government’s healthcare spend and not tax medical equipment which are essential components for affordable healthcare.”

“This move affects consumers, providers and a significant category of medical equipment manufacturers. This is an across the board cess in all imports and it will not lead to local manufacturing for some medical equipment categories and hence increase healthcare costs,” said NATHEALTH Secretary General Siddhartha Bhattacharya.

It further urged the government to retract this move keeping in mind the sectorial need for investments, long term policy stability and affordability of healthcare under Ayushman Bharat.
Decoding the implications of provisions announced in the Union Budget 2020-21, Apex Healthcare Industry body NATHEALTH has urged the government to withdraw imposition of a cess on custom duties for import of Medical Technologies (Med Tech) and said the ‘Make in India’ programme has to be built on a broader vision that builds demand and supply-side incentives through a longer-term policy framework to spur long term investments.

NATHEALTH urged the government to retrace this move keeping in mind the sectorial need for investments, long term policy stability and affordability of healthcare under Ayushman Bharat.

“A cess on custom duties for import has been imposed on imported medical devices in the budget presumably to fund viability gap for new healthcare infrastructure in tier 2/3 cities and spur local manufacturing. While there is a stated need to build new infrastructure, India should earmark direct infrastructure funds out of Government’s healthcare spend and not tax medical equipment which are essential components for affordable healthcare,” said a statement issued by NATHEALTH.

“This move affects consumers, providers and a significant category of medical equipment manufacturers. This is an across the board cess in all imports and it will not lead to local manufacturing for some medical equipment categories and hence increase healthcare costs,” said Siddhartha Bhattacharya, general secretary, NATHEALTH.

While presenting Union Budget Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed a health cess of 5 per cent on imports of specified medical equipment to generate resources for health services. The health cess will be imposed on imports of medical devices, except those exempt from BCD (basic customs duty).