
PUBLIC INPUTS- STATE OF HEALTHCARE IN INDIA

- Private hospitals are preferred over government hospitals in India in terms of infrastructure, better facilities, less waiting time, hassle free delivery of services, proper management, conduction of healthcare staff, quality care, and good hygiene.
 - If we look at reasonable way of whether rural India has adequate health facilities. It is far below than what is required as a threshold. So that's a serious gap in India. Improving infrastructure should be in the right direction. For example: having a certain number of beds in the hospitals would not suffice, it's about functional beds, with medical equipment.
 - We should figure out a way to move things from “measuring quality by giving accreditations” to “measuring treatment outcomes”. The comparison should be what's the cost of treatment vs what's the outcome? Measuring outcomes will make healthcare accountable.
 - Government hospitals should be developed in such a way that people from across sectors/backgrounds prefer government hospitals. A good example of a public hospital particularly a tertiary hospital like AIIMS, being an exception, where everyone wants an appointment, it's mainly because doctors' experience, treatment outcomes, and affordability.
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- Perception: When a resident of rural area, where health facilities are of low quality, comes to the city for treatment, they come with the same perception that government services are not good in the big cities as well so they tend to prefer private hospitals. So, government should shift their focus to the small towns and rural areas and should improve primary healthcare centres in those areas so that overall perception can be changed through good experience.
- Migration: If the hospitals in the rural areas can be improved then the migration from rural to urban areas for treatments will not burden the hospitals/healthcare centres in the urban areas. So the patient burden will ultimately decrease in the bigger hospitals which will make the healthcare system more resilient.
- The issue of shortage of healthcare professionals needs to be addressed urgently.
- The proper utilization of funding that comes to healthcare is important. Government should increase the healthcare expenditure. India produces the world's best doctors but most of them moves to developed countries like US or UK. Two of the main reasons are they are underpaid and they get less respect.
- Only government is not responsible for improving the healthcare system in the country, other stakeholders like private healthcare providers or NGOs should also contribute. At the same time, individuals need to adopt a healthy lifestyle and healthy food habits. For example: As a community, we can maintain proper hygiene in our nearby areas.

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- Government and private sector should come together and develop digital health solutions like eSanjeevani or other platforms that avail teleconsultations to the rural population.
- There should be proper regulation on the pharmaceutical industry which has become a huge profit-making business in the past few years.
- A few of the barriers between consumers/patients and health providers are communication, availability of skilled workforce, socio-economic status of the consumer/patient, and geography.
- One of the biggest barrier in establishing the accountable Healthcare is the lack of transparency in the healthcare sector. This issue can be catered by integrating Electronic Health Records (EHRs) of every patient to their universal health IDs. EHR should have all the medical records of the patient from the condition that the patient is suffering, from to which hospitals and doctor they are visiting.
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- There should be awareness among consumers/patients regarding what they should expect from the healthcare system and from the healthcare providers.

Disclaimer: These inputs are based on the discussion through Twitter Space, conducted by Public Task Force for Accountable Healthcare. And the views are of the people who participated on the platform.

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