

To,
Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya
Hon'ble Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers &
Hon'ble Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Government of India,
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare,
Room No. 348-A,
Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi – 110011

Subject: Establishment of Healthcare Services Pricing Authority (HSPA) & Healthcare Advertising Standards Council (HASC)

*Respected Sir,
Namaste*

Greetings from Health Parliament and International Patients' Union.

I must express my deep appreciation with thanks for the proactive steps taken by you to reform Indian healthcare and make it a global leader in many ways. I am writing to draw your attention to another important reform awaiting your blessings, it is regarding the **unregulated pricing and advertising of essential healthcare services** in India, specifically for **diagnostic tests, medical procedures, and consultations by specialists**. While the Indian healthcare system boasts affordability and innovation, the lack of price regulation in the private sector creates significant challenges for patients.

Here are the key issues I wish to highlight:

- **Lack of Transparency- Irrational pricing:** Private hospitals and laboratories set prices for essential services based on subjective factors, leading to **inconsistent and exorbitant charges that lack any rationale**. This lack of transparency and standardization of prices burdens patients with unexpected bills and leaves them vulnerable to exploitation.
- **Lack of affordability:** The vast price disparities, even for basic tests like a Complete Hemogram (INR 150-500), MRI whole body (INR 8000 – 22500 – 36400), Blood Cancer markers (INR 13000 – 18000), make healthcare inaccessible for many, especially those with limited financial means given that over 81 crore get free ration, certainly they also need affordable healthcare. This undermines the goal of universal healthcare and exacerbates existing health inequalities.
- **Need for a regulatory body:** Similar to the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) that regulates prices of essential medicines, establishing a **national organization specifically for regulating the pricing of essential healthcare services** would significantly improve transparency and affordability. This body should define fair and consistent pricing structures based on objective criteria, ensuring accessibility across income levels and locations.

- **Need for an Advertising Standards Council:** There is a lack of **robust regulations** in healthcare advertising. Unlike other industries, healthcare doesn't have a dedicated watchdog to ensure ethical and truthful messaging. This **absence of checks and balances** allows companies to exploit our vulnerabilities, often leading to misinformation, unnecessary treatments, and increased disease burden.

Benefits of Implementing Price Regulation and Ethical Advertisement:

- **Enhanced transparency:** A regulatory body like Healthcare Services Pricing Authority (HSPA) can ensure transparency in the pricing structure for healthcare services, including medical consultations, thereby fostering trust and accountability within the healthcare system.
- **Improved access to healthcare:** By making essential services more affordable, price regulation can empower individuals to seek timely and necessary care, leading to better health outcomes.
- **Reduced financial burden:** Predictable and fair pricing reduces the risk of financial hardship for patients, especially those facing unexpected medical expenses.
- **Promotes fair competition:** Standardized pricing encourages competition based on quality and service rather than solely on price manipulation.
- **Healthcare Advertising Standards Council (HASC):** MoHFW, in partnership with the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, must set up a HASC to ensure ethical practices with regard to advertising healthcare products and services.

I strongly believe that **regulating the pricing of essential healthcare services is a crucial step towards ensuring a more equitable, affordable, and accessible healthcare system in India and ensuring ethics in healthcare advertising will stop misguiding the general population with regard to healthcare.** I urge MoHFW to consider this proposal and initiate discussions on establishing a dedicated regulatory body at the earliest. We remain at your disposal to draw out a detailed plan and submit it to you should you need the same. We have the necessary capabilities within our team to deliver.

Health Parliament is the world's leading think-tank on healthcare policy issues, and the International Patients' Union is a patients' platform founded to address the challenges related to accessibility, affordability, and quality of healthcare faced by patients across India.

With best regards



Dr. Rajendra Pratap Gupta, PhD.
Founder
Health Parliament | International Patients' Union
Former Advisor to the Union Health Minister

CC: Shri. Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister
Shri. Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Union Minister for Consumer Affairs

Enclosed: Variation in cost of Treatments and Procedures Across Hospitals in India.

S. No	Treatment & Procedures	Minimum Cost (INR)	Maximum Cost (INR)	Variation in cost (in %)
1	Knee replacement surgery	150000	400000	167
2	Hip replacement surgery cost	150000	250000	67
3	Percutaneous coronary intervention or angioplasty	180000	400000	122
4	Arteriogram or angiogram	15000	25000	67
5	Hernia surgery	100000	175000	75
6	Bariatric surgery	225000	475000	111
7	Dialysis	3500	6000	71
8	CABG or bypass surgery	350000	500000	43
9	Hysterectomy	100000	200000	100
10	Stem cell or bone marrow transplantation	1200000	2500000	108
11	Spine surgery	250000	400000	60
12	Kidney stone removal or lithotripsy	100000	200000	100
13	Brain tumour surgery	450000	750000	67
14	Cancer screening	20000	25000	25
15	Colon cancer treatment	400000	500000	25
16	Deep brain stimulation	1200000	1600000	33
17	ERCP	15000	50000	233
18	Laparoscopic surgery	150000	250000	67
19	Liver transplant	2000000	2400000	20
20	Lung cancer treatment	400000	700000	75
21	PET- CT scan	30000	35000	17
22	Shoulder arthroscopy	160000	190000	19
23	Stomach cancer treatment	550000	600000	9
24	Varicose Veins surgery	180000	220000	22
25	Cervical Spine Surgery	250000	400000	60
26	Spine Decompression Surgery	250000	450000	80
27	Mitral Valve Replacement	350000	550000	57
28	Cataract Surgery	15000	100000	567
29	Chemotherapy	4000	40000	900
30	Colonoscopy	9525	22225	133
31	Gastric Bypass Surgery	438230	511268	17
32	Heart Valve Surgery	452838	598914	32
33	Kyphoplasty	75000	300000	300
34	Lumbar Puncture	400	1500	275
35	MRI Scan	1500	25000	67

36	Otoplasty	50000	150000	200
37	Ovarian Cancer Surgery	99000	270242	173
38	Ovarian Cyst Removal	32760	93750	186
39	Pacemaker Surgery	45000	150000	233
40	Piles Surgery	7800	140000	1695
41	Pneumonectomy	130192	550192	323
42	Radiation Therapy	30000	2000000	6567
43	Radical Prostatectomy	80000	220000	175
44	Renal Angioplasty	67000	135000	101
45	Spinal Fusion	189000	850000	350
46	Vasectomy	85102	104740	23
47	Bronchoscopy	8000	10000	25