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Expectations from Budget 2019-Amol Naikawadi

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NCDs are expected to comprise more than 75% of country's disease by 2025. Early diagnosis and timely treatment of NCDs through preventive healthcare can be helpful in reducing the burden on the OOP expenses and overall economic growth of the country.

I strongly recommend the limit of INR 5000 on preventive health checkup under section 80D should be increased to INR 10000 per person annually, or a separate section to be created for wellness for tax reimbursement so that prevention gets its due credit. Additionally, personal genetic tests should also be included specifically in 'Healthcare' definition for GST under exemption notification act. Technologically advanced prevention tools like genetic testing can contribute in personalizing the health and wellness aspects for an individual thereby reducing the curative costs. Moreover, specific tax benefits for preventive healthcare should be given to corporates on per employee basis, so that they are motivated to invest in their employees' health and wellbeing.

The government should also focus on building better infrastructure for the healthcare industry which is a long pending demand and should be given priority in the new budget.