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Expectations from Budget 2019- Ishiqa Multani

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The biggest challenge in the Indian Healthcare sector is the delivery model, especially in rural India. 2018 was the year of big promises, with the Indian government announcing “the world’s largest government-funded health care programme". Doctors,

hospitals and entrepreneurs are demonstrating that startups in healthcare can bring smarter, better, more accessible and more proactive care; showcasing the best way to improve quality and control health care costs.

With the recent launch of an ambitious national healthcare scheme, Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) and it's assumed success, it's time to revisit our country's healthcare landscape. On one hand, we have a globally recognized private healthcare system, while on the other, we have a challenging public health infrastructure. Under the scheme, the urban dwellers are able to access quality healthcare from empaneled private hospitals while the rural segment still suffers the difficulty in accessing due to related out-of-pocket costs, which drives them to either postpone or completely avoid tertiary treatment.

Growing population makes India's healthcare system a complex challenge and an immense opportunity. In this year's interim budget, we expect the government should provision to create further public-private partnerships to allow rural poor to access tertiary healthcare services near them. In addition, the authorities lack a digital platform to effectively collect, manage and use patient centric data from both public and private care providers. Data is key to strengthen good governance and prevent corruption in public spending in addition to creating an epidemiological profile relative to the desired health status of country's population that will determine the success of India's healthcare spending.