BioSpectrum the business of Bi
24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

Industry responds to govt's new healthcare boost

28 June 2021 | News

Healthcare industry hails government's recent initiative



Soon after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced relief package of Rs 6,28,993 crore to support Indian economy in fight against COVID-19 pandemic, with Rs 23,220 crore more for public health with emphasis on children and paediatric care/paediatric beds, industry responses started flowing in-

"Given the compelling need to step up the level of private sector play in the creation of public infrastructure, the announcement of the new streamlined process for appraisal and approval of PPP proposals and monetisation of core infrastructure assets cannot have been more timely or topical. This new policy will be awaited with eagerness both by prospective investors, as well as government stakeholders.

Healthcare has rightly been given a fresh impetus with enhanced allocation of INR 23,220 Cr earmarked for the year for urgent upgradation of critical infrastructure and the augmentation of medical personnel."

Elias George, Partner and Head – Infrastructure, Government and Healthcare (IGH), KPMG in India, Gurugram

---

"The private health sector has played a crucial role in facing this crisis and helped saves numerous lives. However, the period also saw hospitals in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities face severe challenges that threatened their survival. These hospitals now have a lifeline in the form of the 50000-cr. loan guarantee scheme for the health sector with a cap on interest rates. The announcements will also encourage the larger private sector healthcare groups to invest further in health infrastructure in the smaller cities, which in turn will ease access to quality healthcare, bringing world-class medical infrastructure to the doorstep of every common man."

Dr. Prathap C. Reddy, Chairman, Apollo Hospitals Group, Chennai

---

"The additional Rs 23,220 crore allocated for public health will ensure adequate availability of medical equipment and medicines along with strengthening the health infrastructure, not just in battling the current pandemic that is raising its head again with new variants, but also for any future crisis.

The specific emphasis on paediatric patients will help prepare our health infrastructure for any third wave that is expected to have a greater impact on the younger population."

Vivek Tiwari, Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Medikabazaar, Mumbai

---

"We are pleased to note the allocation of INR 50,000 crore for the loan guarantee scheme to the health sector, aimed at scaling up the medical infrastructure for under-served areas. This will help us to upgrade our semi urban and rural healthcare facilities, which urgently require attention. The additional INR 23,220 crore earmarked to focus on paediatric care is also a welcome move. This is a testament to the government’s intent to prepare thoroughly for the third wave of COVID-19, which as reports suggest, could majorly affect children."

Pavan Choudary, Chairman & Director General, Medical Technology Association of India (MTaI), New Delhi

---

"The stimulus package of Rs 50,000 crore for the health sector has come as a huge relief. A guaranteed coverage of 50% for expansion of health-related projects and 75% for new projects has shown the government’s commitment towards improving the present battered state of affairs. Since the second wave has exposed the condition of the healthcare system, it was the need of the hour to scale up the medical infrastructure. India's COVID-19 catastrophe was a result of years of neglecting its public health care structure and a substantial investment to ameliorate the infrastructure is of utmost importance now. An additional Rs 23, 220 crores for the public health sector is a welcome step. Focusing on short-term emergency preparedness with an emphasis on children and paediatric care/paediatric beds, the move will surely help the sector get ready for another impending pandemic wave. One thing that the sector faced during the second wave was the shortage of medical staff and funding for short-term HR augmentation through medical students and nursing students will definitely give the existing medical staff some breathing space."

Dr Gurpreet Sandhu, President, Council for Healthcare & Pharma, New Delhi

---

"The measures announced by the FM are a much needed step in bolstering the healthcare infrastructure in India. Investment in modern equipment, including on-site Oxygen gas generation systems, can be a costly affair. Hospitals and nursing homes in urban and semi-urban India will benefit from direct financial support measures provided by the Government. Reliable supply of oxygen through an on-site oxygen generator will alleviate the woes experienced all over India during the ongoing second wave and provide independence to hospitals for years to come."

Siddharth Rastogi, Executive Director, MVS Engineering, New Delhi

---

"Recently, we have all been helpless witness to our limited healthcare infrastructure struggling to cope with the needs of Covid patients especially during the second Covid phase. Keeping this in mind and in view of the Covid-driven economic slowdown, this is a much-needed respite for the healthcare infrastructure as well as the broader economy. That the finance minister has announced Rs 50,000 crore for the health sector alone implies the centrality that the sector holds at the highest levels of the government. With the provision of 75% coverage for new projects and 50% for expansion of projects, the government has maintained a balance between the imperative to establish new facilities and the need to upgrade the old ones. The focus on tier II and III cities is particularly satisfying which would go a long way in addressing the big city-small town healthcare gap in the country. The 50% guaranteed coverage for aspirational districts for both new and expansion projects is particularly noteworthy in this regard. At the same time, the considerable allocation to child and pediatric care must also be appreciated. With the predictions of an even more destructive third wave, these policy stimuli would also give some momentum to health facilities and infrastructure across the country in the immediate term too."

Ashok Patel, CEO & Founder, Max Ventilator, Vadodara

"The government has shown a clear intent towards ramping up the health infrastructure by allocating Rs 50,000 crore. This will help in stepping up the fight against the COVID-19 havoc across the country. However, as Telemedicine has emerged to be the key enabler of the healthcare ecosystem we are hopeful that more announcements will follow to strengthen the digital health Infrastructure. In order to bridge the gap of health facilities in the rural areas, it is important to scale up the digital health infrastructure too. This will also help in spreading more awareness about the deadly virus and educating the people about the importance of vaccines and other COVID-related myths."

Anurag Khosla, CEO, Aetna India, Gurugram
