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# IVD to boost public outreach and acceptability of digital healthcare in India

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**The Indian in-vitro diagnostics (IVD) industry will be pivotal to reimagining digital healthcare in the country with an emphasis on timely medical intervention, efficient disease management and improved patient outcomes**



In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, virtual healthcare has disrupted the functional paradigms of the healthcare industry of the country. In a survey conducted in 2020 by leading multinational market research and consulting firm Ipsos Group among Indian Healthcare Professionals (HCPs), 95 per cent of doctors affirmed that they consulted with their patients remotely. The integration of advanced digital technologies has the potential to make healthcare vastly accessible and affordable for large sections of the population. The Indian in-vitro diagnostics (IVD) industry will be pivotal to reimagining digital healthcare in the country with an emphasis on timely medical intervention, efficient disease management and improved patient outcomes.

Change has rapidly emerged as the new normal in the Indian healthcare space. With greater awareness of personal hygiene and concerns arising over visiting hospitals for fear of infections, there is an increase in the number of people making informed choices about availing healthcare services. Digital health tools like telemedicine are breaking new ground for personalised healthcare with consumers demanding a greater say in making critical healthcare decisions. With the pandemic mandating stringent distancing measures and restricting patient mobility, a majority of Indian companies in the diagnostics space laid stress on amplifying their digital presence to establish a direct one-on-one connection with patients. The focus has been on shifting direct-to-consumer (DTC) testing services to an online interface to make testing processes increasingly user-friendly and streamlined. At-home testing enabled through online guidance is fast emerging as a cost-effective and convenient way of getting accurate and reliable test results.

In pre-pandemic times, individuals were required to physically visit a healthcare facility, be it a hospital or laboratory for submitting blood and other specimens for clinical testing. There was a significant downtime involved after which they had to go to the facility and get their results. Technological advances in the IVD segment have enabled individuals to carry out sample collections within the confines and comfort of their homes. Low-cost and self-use over-the-counter (OTC) test kits enable consumers to conduct specimen testing on their own.

The Indian healthcare space is at an inflexion point today. By tapping the power of digital technology, the quality of healthcare services can be improved and healthcare access can be ensured for all. A digitally advanced healthcare ecosystem will present significant challenges and opportunities. The IVD industry will need to devise a consumer-centric marketing strategy and focus on scaling up its production capacities. The onus will also have to be on leveraging R&D to reorient their product portfolios to boost patient engagement and cater to the needs of a digitally-evolved consumer base.

Telehealth emerged as a priority focus globally and in India in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Consumers and healthcare players in India and the world over are exploring options for safe healthcare access and delivery. Going ahead, the remote models of health and healthcare monitoring will witness stronger consumer traction. IVD manufacturers will play a more enabling role in boosting the telehealth market by ensuring wider availability of remote monitoring techniques and at-home diagnostics solutions.

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