

Experts propound for robust digital health ecosystem in India

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A stringent lockdown, once again, will do more harm than any good: Dr JA Jayalal

Calling the COVID-19 pandemic a huge 'eye-opener' in helping the Government of India to realize the need for a robust digital healthcare framework system in place, healthcare experts and doyens at the 7th IHW Summit and Awards opined that it is high time that India have a proper digital highway in place to address to the growing healthcare needs of its massive population. The seven edition of the flagship event was organized by the Integrated Health and Wellbeing Council with Optum and Zyla as Health tech and Innovation partners respectively.

Underscoring the challenges posed by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Dr J.A. Jayalal, President, Indian Medical Association, said, "The Government of India needs to adapt to the new technology, so that, even if there is a third wave, will allow us to sail through. Obviously, there will be multi-thronged challenges as long as COVID-19 is around, but there is no need for a lockdown anymore. A stringent lockdown, once again, will do more harm than any good."

While adopting a digital healthcare system is a must, it comes with its own sets of challenges in a country, according to Vibhav Garg, Director-Health Economics & Govt Affairs, India HUB & ASEAN, Boston Scientific.

Stressing the need for an integrated healthcare system in India in the post-COVID-19 world, Dr Harsh Mahajan, Founder & Chief Radiologist, Mahajan Imaging said, "The government needs to rope in more private players in the existing healthcare system.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us one very important thing – to provide high-quality healthcare, and that too, when physical distancing is a must, you need an around-the-clock digital healthcare system in place. That is why it is need of the hour for the Government of India to put in a place a robust digital framework," said Swati Rangachari, Vice President and Country Leader, Public Affairs and Strategic Engagements, United Health Group | Optum.