

## National Health Policy 2015 out in the public domain

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### National Health Policy 2015 out in public domain, Govt seeks suggestions



Despite the fact that it has cut the health budget in the last quarter by 30 percent, the Modi government is focusing on healthcare bigtime. The same is visible in the policy draft put in the public domain by the ministry of health and family welfare specifically mentioning that over 75 percent of the diseases are currently out of national programs, the policy draft for health has sought suggestions and feedback from concerned stakeholders and the general public. The draft also contains aims and objectives. While it thanks the National Health Policy of 1983 and that of 2002 in guiding the approach for the health sector in the Five-Year Plans and for different schemes, it stresses on the fact that in 13 years after the last health policy, the context has changed in terms of priorities.

The National Health Policy accepts and endorses the understanding that a full achievement of the goals and principles as defined would require an increased public health expenditure which is 4 to 5 percent of the Gross Domestic GDP. It also notes that 40 percent of this would need to come from Central expenditure. At current prices, a target of 2.5 percent of GDP translates to Rs 3,800 per capita, representing an almost four-fold increase in five years. Thus, a longer time frame may be appropriate to even reach this modest target. The policy also recommends the formation of Steering Committees that bring together the Department of Pharmaceuticals, the Department of Biotechnology, the regulatory bodies, the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, the Departments of Science and Technology with the Health Ministry for drug and devices discovery and innovation.