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FICCI seeks quick notification of e-pharmacy rules

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Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) has supported the industry to come up with a 'Code of Conduct' for e-Pharmacies in the country to ensure proper compliance and high standards of operation and ensure there is no compromise in patient safety.

Currently, there are 50+ start-ups operating in e-Pharmacy space in the country, which provides quality and affordable medicines to about 50 lakh patients per month across the country and has served patients across 19000 + PIN codes. About 30,000 skilled professionals are employed by the sector. e-Pharmacy sector has attracted Rs 4000 crore plus in FDI from some of the top global investors, and another Rs 2000 crore is expected in the next 2 to 3 years.

According to FICCI, the delay in the notification of e-Pharmacy draft rules is causing confusion and anxiety for all the stakeholders involved in digital health ecosystem.

Prashant Tandon, Chairperson, FICCI e-Pharmacy Working Group, said, "e-Pharmacies abide by FICCI Code of conduct for e-Pharmacies, and comply with the laws of the land. All the orders for prescription-based medicines are processed only against a copy of valid prescription and are dispensed by a licensed pharmacy having a registered pharmacist. e-Pharmacies strictly do not accept orders for habit forming medicines, narcotics, or any other sensitive medicines. Additionally, given the importance of the e-Pharmacy sector globally, several large investors have recently reached out to the e-Pharmacy players, expressing concern about the general investment and regulatory climate in India and have asked for clarifications. Given the government's solid track record in making India 'Open for Business' we have been trying to allay their fears".

FICCI is hopeful that the government would take into account the importance of digitization in healthcare space which eventually leads to an empowered consumer, and requests the government to notify the Draft e-Pharmacy Rules at the earliest.