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Expecting spend on strengthening our primary healthcare system: Manipal Hospitals

19 January 2022 | Views

Dr H Sudarshan Ballal, Chairman, Manipal Hospitals

"The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly highlighted the importance of a robust healthcare system in the country and has shown the world that you are only as strong as your healthcare systems. This has made healthcare a priority as was seen in last year's budget, where a lot of emphasis and expenditure was devoted to healthcare.

Our expectations for Budget 2022 are:

- *Increased allocation for healthcare since we still have a lot of ground to cover in our expenditure on healthcare*
- *Spend on strengthening our primary healthcare system which is the backbone of healthcare in India, public healthcare, preventive healthcare in addition to nutrition in children, and aggressive vaccination campaigns to include Covid-19 vaccination for all*
- *We also need to strengthen the public healthcare system by upgrading the infrastructure and personnel at government hospitals*
- *Specifically, strengthen pediatric care, and pediatric intensive care, along with setting up of training programs and teams of intensive care doctors in government hospitals including in adult intensive care*
- *Invest in more diagnostic labs across the country which was a necessity during the current pandemic*
- *Set up more medical colleges especially in underserved areas and upgrade district hospitals to be the teaching hospitals for these colleges*
- *Invest in technology to bridge the rural-urban divide in healthcare and make healthcare available for all in the country by expanding our universal healthcare schemes"*