

Health sector deserves more attention in government outlays: MTal

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The focus on infrastructure, logistics, skilling will help the sector



Medical Technology Association of India (MTal) has welcomed the increase in capital expenditure by 35.4 per cent from Rs 5.54 lakh crore to Rs 7.5 lakh crore.

Pavan Choudary, Chairman, MTal, said, "A 35.4 per cent increase in CAPEX is a significant boost, even if we were to discount some of this delta which would not apply. We do hope that the benefit is also received by the healthcare sector which needs a big boost."

Sanjay Bhutani, Country Manager at Bausch & Lomb India; and Director, MTal, said, "Overall, while the government has not penalised enterprise further by keeping the income tax constant, perhaps more could have been done for the immediate short-term relief in the middle-income sector. Similarly, with the GST collections being robust, it was an opportunity to correct the high tax regime for medical devices and zero rates the healthcare services that would have brought an immediate reduction in the patient costs burden."

Further on analysing the budget, Meenakshi Nevatia, VP & MD- Stryker India; and Director, MTal stated, "Budget has announced some positive moves including the National Digital Health Ecosystem and the National Tele Mental Health programme which will serve our people in India and the health sector well in the medium and long term. However, the short-term relief that the industry needs has not been dealt with including the much-needed withdrawal of the health cess and the relook at customs duties which continue to be much higher than in all our neighbouring countries. Also, it remains unclear how much of the capital allocated will focus on the direct expansion of the health infrastructure particularly in Tier II and III cities which is a real need of the hour".

On PM Gatishakti announcement, Sandeep Makkar, Director, MTal, added that the priority investments in infrastructure, logistics, energy and IT combined with increased funding for production-linked incentive schemes, medical device parks, and emphasis on upskilling and reskilling of the workforce is a strong positive signal."