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Indian Medical Parliamentariansâ?? Forum organises National Policy Summit on â??Swasth Bharat Se Saksham Bharatâ?? to reimagine MedTech access in India

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The summit brought together senior government and institutional leaders from across Indiaâ??s healthcare ecosystem

The Indian Medical Parliamentarians' Forum (IMPF) convened the National Policy Summit on MedTech Access on September 22 at Meril Academy, Vapi, under the theme "Swasth Bharat Se Saksham Bharat | Reimagining MedTech Access in India."

The summit brought together Members of Parliament, senior government officials, healthcare institutions, clinical experts and industry stakeholders to deliberate on strengthening India's medical technology ecosystem and expanding access to quality, advanced and affordable healthcare technologies.

The summit was chaired by Dr Anil Sukhdeorao Bonde, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha and Chairperson, IMPF. Senior representatives from the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Department of Health Research, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, National Health Authority (NHA), AIIMS Nagpur and the National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC) participated in the discussions.

The summit featured two panel discussions that brought together policymakers, healthcare experts, academic leaders and industry representatives to advance reform-oriented discussions on India's medical technology ecosystem and pathways to wider patient access.

The first panel, "Building a Sustainable and Globally Competitive MedTech Ecosystem,"examined the enabling ecosystem required to support indigenous medical technology development and global competitiveness. The discussion covered areas including research and innovation, regulatory and quality frameworks, industry-academia collaboration, domestic manufacturing capabilities, supply-chain resilience, clinical requirements and the creation of an ecosystem that could support Indian MedTech companies in addressing both domestic and global healthcare needs. The panel was chaired by Dr Shivaji Bandappa Kalge, with Manoj Joshi serving as Co-Chair. Dr Vibhav Garg, Moderator, Meril, moderated the discussion, which also featured Prof. (Dr) Prashant P. Joshi and Dr Neha Dumka as panellists.

The second panel, "Expanding Access to Quality Care through MedTech Innovation," focused on the factors that determine whether medical technology can translate from innovation into meaningful patient access. The discussion examined clinical evidence, health technology assessment, financing and reimbursement, technology adoption, healthcare workforce capabilities and the challenges of extending advanced technologies across different levels of the health system. The panel was chaired by Dr Jashvantsinh Parmar and moderated by Dr Sharmila Sarkar, with Dr Gaurav Shanker Pradhan, Dr Shailesh Kumar Yadav and Dr Suchita Markan participating as panellists.

Speaking at the summit, Dr Anil Sukhdeorao Bonde, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha and Chairperson, IMPF, said, *"Innovation without access has limited impact, and access without evidence cannot be sustained. For India to build a globally competitive medical technology ecosystem, we need stronger indigenous research and development, credible clinical evidence, appropriate health technology assessment and sustainable reimbursement mechanisms. Manufacturing must be supported by the right clinical skills, infrastructure and technical ecosystem, particularly as advanced technologies such as robotics become more accessible. Our ultimate objective must be Indian innovation, global-quality technology and affordable access for every patient who needs it."*

Manoj Kumar Joshi, Co-Chair and Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, said,*"For India to become self-reliant in medical devices, we need a strong ecosystem built around quality, evidence and credibility. Our*

regulatory system must evolve to ensure that products developed in India meet globally credible standards. At the same time, we need to strengthen domestic supply chains, engineering capabilities and component manufacturing. Building this ecosystem will not only support healthcare access but also contribute to employment and the country's overall prosperity."

Addressing the role of healthcare institutions in advancing medical technology, Dr Prashant P. Joshi said, *"Medical institutions should not be limited to validating technologies developed elsewhere; they should help identify unmet clinical needs and work with engineers, researchers and innovators to develop solutions around those needs. We need stronger collaboration between medical and engineering institutions through joint research, academic programmes, fellowships and training. At AIIMS Nagpur, we are exploring such collaborations with institutions such as IIT Bombay. Building this interdisciplinary ecosystem can significantly strengthen India's medical technology innovation and ultimately improve patient care."*

Highlighting the importance of clinical adoption and capacity building, Dr Gaurav Shanker Pradhan said, *"Access to medical technology is not simply about making a device available. A device can create meaningful impact only when healthcare professionals are able to use it safely, confidently and effectively. We need to move from an equipment-centric approach to a technology adoption model, with competency-based training for clinicians, technicians and other healthcare professionals. Digital learning and remote training can also help extend this capacity to underserved and rural areas."*

Dr Shailesh Kumar Yadav, IAS, Joint Director, National Health Authority, highlighted the importance of linking innovation with sustainable financing and reimbursement. He said, *"For a medical technology to reach the patient, clinical effectiveness must be supported by appropriate financing and reimbursement pathways. Under Ayushman Bharat, newer interventions require credible clinical and economic evidence before they can be incorporated into health benefit packages. We also need to look beyond the upfront cost of a device and consider the total cost of care, including treatment, hospitalisation, personnel and follow-up. This will help us build a healthcare system that is both affordable and sustainable."*

Emphasising the need to evaluate technologies within the realities of the health system, Dr Neha Dumka said, *"Technology has an important role to play in strengthening primary healthcare, particularly as our disease burden continues to evolve. However, innovation must be assessed not only for its technical capabilities, but also for ease of use, cost-effectiveness, scalability and sustainability within the health system. We need to ensure that technologies can be effectively adopted at different levels of care and ultimately reach the beneficiaries who need them. Strengthening this pathway will be essential for equitable access to quality healthcare."*

Speaking on strengthening healthcare delivery at the grassroots, Dr Jashvantsinh Parmar said, *"To take medical technology from innovation to meaningful patient access, we first need to identify the bottlenecks in the existing system. We must strengthen the capabilities of healthcare professionals at the grassroots, particularly those working at CHCs and sub-district centres. Technologies should be introduced systematically and evaluated through comparative, data-based studies. Most importantly, their acceptability among healthcare professionals and patients must be considered if we want innovations to achieve meaningful adoption."*

Highlighting the potential of Indian medical device manufacturers, Dr Shivaji Kalge said, *"Indian medical device companies are increasingly capable of developing technologies that meet international standards while remaining affordable for Indian patients. We are already seeing Indian companies compete with international products in areas such as ophthalmology and other medical specialties. If we continue to strengthen research, quality and innovation, these technologies can become more widely accepted globally. This can help improve access to quality healthcare for Indian patients at more affordable prices."*