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Exclusive: We can help shape Indian health services: NHS

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In June 2016, National Health Service's (NHS) Chairman Sir Malcolm Grant was in India and led a world-class delegation which exhibited and showcased its expertise in Delhi and Mumbai. This is said to be a leading, high-powered healthcare trade mission in the form of Smart Healthcare demonstrator featuring the very best of UK companies in modern healthcare, specifically chosen for their ability to support India's Smart Healthcare initiatives.

This delegation is a part of the agreement between UK-India during PM Modi's visit to the UK where the two Prime Ministers emphasized the potential to increased investment and co-operation in health and related sectors. The UK's healthcare sector is a thriving ecosystem of researchers, scientists, engineers, designers, National Health Service clinicians, and an unrivalled database and network of healthcare professionals.

In his exclusive interview with *BioSpectrum*, Sir Grant shares the NHS' inside innovations, Indo-UK Smart Healthcare collaborations, India's opportunities, the organization's strategy and investments in India, and its growth plans for the next couple of years. Excerpts:

Q: Give us a glimpse about the innovative happenings in the UK's Smart Healthcare sector.

A: It is hard to give just a glimpse: there is so much to say! One of the most innovative things about the NHS is that it provides a complete healthcare system for all its citizens, it is the embodiment of Universal Health Care in practice. Through our Five Year Forward View, we are now taking this to new levels with our unique New Models of Care programme where services will provide a fully-integrated service across primary, secondary and tertiary care.

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Our RightCare programme aims to address deep seated inequalities in health and healthcare and ensure patients get the right treatment at the right time. This will involve patients even more in their own care, improve health outcomes and make the system more cost-effective.

Our NHS Digital programme promotes self-management apps and systems for patients and confidential sharing of data between professionals to make care more effective and efficient. Our 100,000 Genomes Project puts the UK in the forefront of developing personalised medicine where genetic technology will mean patients get exactly the right treatment they need and are not treated unnecessarily.

What is most exciting about the NHS is the day-to-day innovation that goes on across our services: we see innovative ways of keeping people from unnecessary visits or admissions to hospital, reducing delays when a patient is in hospital, or systems to

ensure the right staff are always in the right place. The UK offers one of the widest range of tax incentives and specials funds to incentivise investment in our vibrant life sciences industry. Our industry is at the forefront of discovery and innovation in, for example, genomics, cellular biology and imaging physics. This has given us 77 Nobel prizes for contributions to biomedical science.

Q: What opportunities are available for the Indian Smart Healthcare sector in the UK?

A: We want to encourage Indian companies to work with the NHS in solving the challenges faced by all healthcare systems. One example of this are our NHS Test Beds where innovative companies from across the world will work with frontline NHS staff to pioneer and evaluate novel combinations of interconnected devices like wearable monitors, data analysis and ways of working to help patients stay well and monitor their conditions at home. Five Test Beds have been announced so far.

We welcome investment by Indian Smart Healthcare companies into the UK, and provide incentives for them to do so.

Q: How do you think the UK can contribute in shaping the Indian Healthcare sector?

A: In five main areas of building design and management, effective clinical practice, top-class training, specialist digital applications and whole system management.

The UK has some of the best designers and engineers for creating and managing healthcare buildings and facilities. These promote health and recovery for patients, well-being for staff, and efficient for the funders. They are sustainable buildings that reduce energy use and will adapt to changes in climate and medical practice.

The UK is known for the highest quality clinical practice informed by world-class research, training, equipment and systems. We can help shape Indian health services to give the best outcomes and highest satisfaction for patients.

We also have top-class universities, colleges and training companies that can provide specialist post graduate training for all professional staff in every speciality. We can provide this online and face-to-face in India and the UK.
The UK has innovative digital systems that collect relevant data for managing the quality of clinical services, and uses big data to ensure the right diagnosis; treatments are given and services are efficient. Whilst India has great digital innovations, the UK has some niche applications, for example, in telemedicine and creating safe facilities.

We have experience in managing services for whole populations of insured patients: whether behavioural interventions to promote health or systems, to ensure consistently high standards of care are maintained.

Q: What collaborations do you think India and the UK Healthcare sector needs to immediately work upon?

A: The UK can help design smart city health systems that ensure people live and work in a healthy environment and live a healthy lifestyle. We can show how providing a range of accessible services reduces ill-health and unnecessary use of hospital services.

We can work on systems to make hospitals top-class in both quality and efficiency. We can partner with Indian digital companies to bring specialist niche expertise to make healthcare work better.

We recognize that most of the new investment is going into the private sector and aim to work with investors, developers and operators in this sector whilst maintaining our supportive role with National and State governments.

Q: According to you where do you think Indian Healthcare system lacks or can further improve upon?

A: I am very impressed with the energy, innovation and splendid facilities in some of your best hospitals. But this is not the case across the system and we think we can bring our experience of one of the most cost-effective health systems in the world in a wider range of existing and new hospitals and healthcare services.

Q: What would be your strategy in India? How do you intend to work in the Indian Healthcare landscape?

A: We will continue to work with the Union government and states to support India in major challenges such as healthcare education, the development of primary care, and anti-microbial resistance.

We believe in developing and maintaining trusted relationships with major healthcare providers and developers to ensure NHS organizations, UK Universities, and companies can do business in a healthy partnership: as PM Modi says, an unbeatable combination.

Q: What challenges do you foresee that may need to be addressed while collaborating?

A: We have a challenge in demonstrating just how much the UK can offer. So for example, in June 2016, I lead a delegation which exhibited and showcased its expertise in two venues in Delhi and Mumbai.

We know that UK prices are not sustainable in the Indian markets, so we encourage our suppliers to develop cost-effective methods in partnership with Indian suppliers.

And we have to continue to convince UK suppliers that India is a great place to do business and that concerns, for example, about trustworthiness in business and the distance from the UK can be overcome.

Q: What can the Indian Healthcare system learn from the NHS?

A: Fundamentally, we can help produce what the US Commonwealth Fund has named (in 2014) as the most effective healthcare service in the developed world in an Indian context. This may be a privately funded system or if required, a government system.

Q: Any newer implementations that can we can anticipate from NHS in the next couple of years?

A: We expect to see the first of a series of new Indo-UK Institutes of Health come up in the next couple of years. This is a partnership with Kings College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust in London and other UK suppliers to create UK standard hospitals and training institutes.

We also hope to see UK companies who normally work with the NHS working with partners in India to respond to government tenders as we have done in the Maharashtrian ambulance service.

There are also some exciting collaborations in particular specialities and in training programs which are happening between major Indian hospitals and the NHS, and UK private healthcare sector which I hope will be announced in the coming months.

Thanks you for the opportunity to make these comments in your magazine.