

India's healthcare expenditure lowest in the world: KPMG

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Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) account for nearly 60 percent of deaths in India annually. The country is estimated to lose \$4.58 trillion by 2030 due to them.

India clearly faces a large and looming economic and wellness burden and prioritising healthcare has never been more critical. It is imperative that all stakeholders collaborate and increase their commitment towards a patient-centric healthcare ecosystem.

The 'KPMG - OPPI background paper on healthcare access initiatives' presents the current healthcare scenario in India and the future burden should there be a further delay in access initiatives; it also summarizes the various interventions undertaken by member companies of the Organization of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) in this regard.

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The background paper highlights worrying statistics and insights into the Indian Healthcare system:

â€¢ Poor Healthcare Indices - Life expectancy in India (68 years in 2015) is amongst the lowest in BRIC nations

â€¢ Inadequate healthcare infrastructure - Number of hospital beds per 1,000 population of 0.9, lowest among BRIC nations. Seventy-five percent of dispensaries and 60 percent of hospitals are in the urban areas

â€¢ Need for more trained human resources - Lowest number of physicians per 10,000 population among BRIC. Eighty percent of doctors are in the urban areas serving only 28 percent of the population

â€¢ Poor availability - In rural India, only 37 percent of people have access to In-Patient Department (IPD) facilities within a 5 km distance; and only 68 percent have access to an Out-Patient Department (OPD)

â€¢ Burdened care - Nearly 63 million people are in debt due to health expenditure

â€¢ Poor insurance coverage - Nearly 75 percent of population uncovered. Out-of-pocket (OOP) contributes close to 86 percent of private and 60 percent of overall healthcare expenditure. India spends less on healthcare than most other middle income countries

Commenting on this immediate need of the hour, Mr Utkarsh Palnitkar, Partner and Head, Infrastructure, Government, Healthcare and Life Sciences, KPMG India, said, "While the Government of India plays a laudable role in providing healthcare, human life lost due to lack of awareness is staggering! Often, disease detection is so delayed that neither access nor affordability can play any role. Only a long-term, proactive strategy with education and awareness at its centre, involving all stakeholders, that is, healthcare providers, insurance companies and healthcare and pharmaceutical companies, can achieve the desired vision of a healthy country."

[See Also: Utkarsh Palnitkar joins KPMG India as Head - Life sciences practice](#)

India has also not been able to meet most of the health targets under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), defined by the UN Summit in 2000.

Dr Shailesh Ayyangar, President, OPPI, talks about healthcare for all. He says, "Universal Healthcare is a social priority. It aims to powerfully enhance the health of people and its rewards go well beyond health. India's healthcare strategy requires a holistic approach and a critical evaluation of our existing systems.

"We need sustainable policy solutions to address healthcare financing, infrastructure and human resource challenges."