

NITI AAYOG HOLDS DIALOGUE ON HEALTH SYSTEM FOR NEW INDIA

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NITI Aayog

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Day-long deliberations on a fifteen year vision for the health sector

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The NITI Aayog today organized a day-long dialogue on “Health System for A New India: Building Blocks”, with national and international academia, practitioners, Indian policymakers and other stakeholders of the healthcare ecosystem.

The dialogue was the first in the series of NITI Aayog’s “Development Dialogues” that aims to facilitate multisectoral conversations on India’s developmental issues, which constitute a part of the country’s 15 Year Vision document.

The inaugural session was chaired by Dr Vinod Paul, Member, NITI Aayog and included the participation of Shri Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog, MsPreeti Sudan, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Shri Alok Kumar, Adviser, NITI Aayog. Dr. SuwitWibulpolprasert, Global Health Advisor, Government of Thailand gave the keynote address detailing Thailand’s four-decade journey towards Universal Health Coverage.

“This dialogue is a sign that Health has taken center-stage of the policy narrative. We must move towards breaking silos between various stakeholders in the health space, remove fragmentation between various initiatives, and ensure convergence between various ministries and also between Centre and States. POSHAN Abhiyan and Ayushman Bharat can be an innovative model to view integrated health systems”, said Dr Rajiv Kumar, Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog, addressing the closing plenary of the dialogue.

The dialogue focused on strengthening and further building on the existing blocks for Health Systems for a New India and prioritized four critical health systems issues for discussion and debate. These included expanding resources for health through pooling existing funds; expanding the role of the government as a strategic purchaser from both public and private providers to improve quality of healthcare services; provision of equitable and integrated services; and leveraging technology as an enabler and aggregator.

The dialogue also deliberated convergence of fragmented building blocks of financing and service provision, with each reinforcing the other, and moving from programmatic or schematic approaches to a systems approach to healthcare.

The roll-out of the ambitious Ayushman Bharat was also hailed as a good opportunity to bring in systems thinking and de-fragmenting the various building blocks of healthcare systematically

over time. Further, strengthening governance, policy and regulatory frameworks and institutions were deemed key to ensuring systemic transformation of the health sector for a new India.

There was broad consensus that the development of a health system for India can lead to the growth of a healthy and globally competitive healthcare insurance and health service provision industry and more importantly, improved consumer experience and citizen trust in the healthcare system. Dr Paul emphasized that trust in the system will be key for building an efficient health system for a new India, which is inclusive, integrative and indigenous.

As Mr Kant stated in the inaugural plenary, it is time to bring the patient to the centre of the health care narrative and the time has come to evolve a world-class health system which is transformative and uniquely Indian.

It is estimated that if the required decisions in terms of creating a functioning Health system are taken, then it shall reduce adult deaths by up to 16% by 2030, thereby increasing economic growth up to 32%.

It is also estimated that breaking programmatic silos and integration of various schemes within a systems approach will lead to reduction in avoidable out-of-pocket expenses to about 45% of total health spending by 2030, preventing at least 1.5 million additional households to go below the poverty line due to illness and unaffordable health care.

The discussions were guided by analysis undertaken by well-known international experts from multilateral organisations, along with over 25 national and international experts from over six countries and 150 participants representing government, private sector, insurance companies, third party administrators, research and academia.

The analysis and insights highlight that investments in strengthening and building on the current mixed health system will reap social and economic dividend for India.

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