PERSPECTIVE

Sustaining Current Policies and Introducing New Initiatives: Strategic Five-year Plan for the Government of India

Sudip Bhattacharya[1], K Madan Gopal[2], Suneela Garg[3]

[1]Assistant Professor, Department of Community & Family Medicine, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Deoghar, Jharkhand
[2]Advisor- Public Health Administration Division, National Health Systems Resource Centre New Delhi
[3]Chair Program Advisory Committee, National Institute of Health & Family Welfare, Munirka, New Delhi

ABSTRACT

A review of key documents, including political manifestos and reports from NITI Aayog and WHO, outlines healthcare priorities for 2024-2029, aligned with Viksit Bharat 2047 and the UN SDGs. Key actions include expanding Universal Health Coverage through Ayushman Bharat, improving rural healthcare, addressing medical staff shortages, and leveraging digital health, telemedicine, and interoperable records. National missions targeting disease prevention, mental health, and non-communicable diseases aim to promote healthier lifestyles. Strengthening public health preparedness and health information systems, while promoting traditional medicine, is also essential. Expanding maternal and child health programs, increasing access via AB-PMJAY, ensuring quality through NQAS, and driving innovation with R&D funding are vital. Enhanced tobacco control through COTPA, higher taxes, and NTCP campaigns, along with investments in WASH infrastructure through Swachh Bharat and Jal Jeevan Missions, will improve health outcomes. Geriatric care, digitalisation, digital health, mental health, community health workers, and partnerships are critical. Initiatives like healthcare innovation hubs, mobile clinics, and health equity programs will build a resilient, inclusive healthcare system and improve national health.

INTRODUCTION

Based on a comprehensive review of critical documents, including political manifestos (2014 and 2019), reports from NITI Aayog, WHO, and the National Health Policy 2017, the ministry should consider the following strategic actions for 2024-2029 in collaboration with healthcare professionals.

These strategies align with the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations. Recent announcements by the Government of India towards Viksit Bharat 2047 underscore the need for a transformative approach to healthcare. This article outlines strategic initiatives that build on existing policies while introducing new measures to improve the nation's health outcomes.

Accelerating Universal Health Coverage (UHC): Accelerating Universal Health Coverage (UHC) ensures everyone can access crucial healthcare services without financial hardship. While the Ayushman Bharat scheme is a positive step, more must be done to expand coverage and improve service quality. This can be achieved by elevating the National Health Mission (NHM) to meet the National Health Policy 2017 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) goals. Increasing the NHM budget by 20% annually could significantly enhance the reach and quality of services. For example, Kerala's patient feedback mechanisms have improved patient satisfaction by 30%, showcasing the potential of quality health services. Ensuring quality health services with accountability measures such as patient feedback and grievance mechanisms is vital. Expanding Ayushman Bharat's infrastructure and insurance coverage, particularly for vulnerable and underserved groups like seniors, will promote equitable healthcare. Developing a detailed annual plan for coverage expansion and empowering states to create tailored UHC models to address specific health challenges and demographics are also crucial. States like Kerala and Tamil Nadu have shown significant progress with localised models. Tamil Nadu's model of integrating public and private healthcare providers has resulted in a 40% reduction in out-of-pocket expenses for patients. Finally, maximising existing scheme coverage and institutionalising a camp-based approach to healthcare delivery will ensure comprehensive access and effectiveness of health services.

Primary Healthcare Strengthening: Strengthening primary healthcare facilities is vital for ensuring essential healthcare services, especially in rural and remote areas, which may involve improving infrastructure, staffing, and the availability of essential medicines and equipment availability. Transforming 50% of the existing 30,000 PHCs by 2029 could reduce the burden on tertiary hospitals by 25%. In Maharashtra, revitalising Ayushman Arogya Mandirs led to a 50% increase in preventive health check-ups, demonstrating the impact of focused initiatives. Upgrading primary health centres to offer comprehensive 24/7 services, enhancing curative care with advanced facilities, and transforming Ayushman Arogya Mandirs into preventive care hubs are vital. Fortifying healthcare infrastructure with state-of-the-art diagnostic tools and launching national nutrition, hygiene, and preventive health campaigns is essential. Integrating traditional and modern medicine, establishing public-private partnerships, and ensuring transparent procurement processes will enhance service delivery. Integrating Ayurveda with modern medicine in treating chronic illnesses in Karnataka has resulted in a 30% improvement in patient outcomes. Developing robust health data systems will optimise resource allocation and assess the impact of health initiatives. (2)

Tackling Human Resources in Health (HRH) Crisis: Currently, India has a shortage of 600,000 doctors and 2 million nurses. Increasing educational seats by 30% for doctors and 50% for nurses can significantly address this gap. Developing a dynamic HRH master plan with clear goals is vital for healthcare improvement, including assessing workforce needs, identifying specialisation, geography, and skill gaps beyond doctor-to-population ratios, and setting 5- and 10-year targets to increase educational seats, create new training cadres, and address geographic disparities. Similar initiatives in countries like Brazil have dramatically improved healthcare access in rural regions. Defining "underserved areas" will guide targeted interventions. Investments should focus on areas with severe staffing supply and quality gaps, increasing medical, nursing, and allied health

education seats, particularly in government institutions in underserved areas, and creating new mid-level healthcare providers. Strengthening public health and management cadres with state-specific HR policies is essential for capacity building and talent retention. Mandatory rural service for new healthcare professionals will address rural healthcare gaps. Continuous skill development programs for primary care staff and performance-based incentive schemes will improve healthcare service delivery and outcomes(3)

Digital Health Transformation: To improve healthcare in India, the government must implement interoperable health record standards, launch an open data platform, and expand Unique Health IDs with solid privacy safeguards. Estonia's digital health record system has improved patient outcomes by enabling better care coordination and reducing medical errors. Implementing similar systems in India could enhance healthcare delivery and reduce administrative costs by 20%. Electronic Health Records (EHRs) should be standardised and linked to Aadhaar, focusing on data security. Integrating telemedicine and e-Sanjeevani with physical healthcare is essential to bridge rural-urban gaps. Real-time health surveillance systems need to be established for efficient disease monitoring. Advancing health data analytics will enable real-time tracking and informed policy-making. Healthcare delivery should be enhanced through telemedicine, data analytics, and AI, utilising dedicated Telemedicine Units and a Hub-and-Spoke Model. Comprehensive digital health solutions, including EHRs and patient management systems, must be deployed to provide anonymised data for research and planning purposes. Empowering a tech-enabled workforce involves equipping ASHA workers with advanced tools, exploring AI-assisted diagnostics, and mandating online courses for continuous skill upgrading.

Prevention & Wellness as a National Mission: Establishing a National NCD Control Mission involves creating a robust data system and

primary care-based treatment strategy while launching campaigns against significant risk factors like tobacco and unhealthy diets. AMR could cause 10 million deaths annually worldwide by 2050 if not addressed. A robust national action plan on AMR, modelled after successful European programs, can help mitigate this threat. Fostering a 'Healthy India' social movement entails cross-sectoral partnerships to integrate health into policies. Introducing a Health Equity Scorecard monitors progress on health outcomes and rewards states that excel in holistic health indicators. Strengthening disease surveillance and emergency trauma care services aims to enhance preparedness and treatment within 48 hours. Focus on eliminating high-priority diseases, enhancing family welfare, and stabilising the population to prepare for demographic changes. Strengthening early childhood interventions and school health programs and establishing regional-level institutions for data-driven planning are essential. Early childhood intervention programs in Scandinavian countries have significantly reduced the incidence of developmental disorders. Lastly, upgrading the legal framework includes transitioning to the National Public Health Act and addressing critical health-related legislation (5)

Breaking Mental Health Barriers: To comprehensively address mental health, it is crucial to launch a national de-stigmatisation campaign using mass media influencers and local leaders to normalise seeking help for mental health issues. Increasing mental health service utilisation by 30% through a national de-stigmatisation campaign would align with the WHO's recommendations on mental health. Integrating mental health into primary care involves implementing essential screening and counselling services at Primary Health Centers (PHCs). Integrating mental health into primary care has proven effective in countries like the UK, improving early detection and treatment rates. Enhancing care includes employing dedicated mid-level mental health providers linked to PHCs and offering telepsychiatry support. Transforming schools into mental well-being hubs requires

mandating counsellors, introducing age-appropriate mental health education, and establishing proactive support systems. Prioritising mental health in the workplace involves implementing legal protections, training managers to recognise and address issues, and incentivising companies to prioritise employees' psychological well-being. (6)

Addressing Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs): The Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) Prevention and Control (NPNCD) programme targets cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, and diabetes. It focuses on implementing health education campaigns to raise awareness about NCD risk factors, promoting healthy lifestyles and supportive environments, ensuring equitable access to healthcare for prevention and treatment, implementing population-based screening and health checks, enacting policies for healthy environments, fostering multisectoral collaboration; and establishing surveillance systems and conducting research to inform effective prevention strategies. (7) The NPNCD program must implement comprehensive health education campaigns and promote healthy lifestyles. In Singapore, such initiatives have significantly reduced NCD prevalence.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness: Strengthening public health emergency preparedness through comprehensive risk assessments and enhanced disease surveillance can mitigate the impact of future pandemics. COVID-19 highlighted the need for robust healthcare infrastructure, which India must bolster. The Government of India can strengthen public health emergency preparedness through several vital actions. It includes conducting comprehensive risk assessments via the NDMA, training healthcare professionals on emergency protocols through MoHFW programs, and enhancing disease surveillance with systems like the IDSP. Infrastructure upgrades like COVID-19 hospitals and testing labs bolster healthcare capacity. Effective communication

and coordination channels ensure timely response alignment, while community engagement initiatives promote local resilience. Research and innovation investments support new tools and vaccines, notably in COVID-19 vaccine development. International collaborations with entities like CEPI and WHO's GOARN enhance global readiness and resource sharing in pandemic response efforts. (8)

Health Information Systems: Strengthening health information systems is crucial for India to improve healthcare delivery, monitor public health trends, and inform policy decisions effectively, which may involve investing in robust digital health infrastructure like the National Health Portal, promoting electronic health records (EHR) through initiatives such as the National Digital Health Mission, and implementing comprehensive Health Management Information Systems (HMIS) like the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's system. Expanding telemedicine platforms like eSanjeevani enhance access to remote healthcare consultations while establishing Health Information Exchange (HIE) networks like Tamil Nadu's TNHIE, facilitating seamless data exchange among healthcare facilities. Standardising data formats and interoperability standards through initiatives like the Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) ensures system consistency. Capacity-building programs by institutions like the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare (NIHFW) enhance skills in health informatics. Ensuring data security and privacy under regulations like the Personal Data Protection Bill 2019 safeguards health information integrity. These efforts strengthen India's health information systems, supporting data-driven decision-making and improving healthcare outcomes nationwide. (9) Investing in robust digital health infrastructure, such as the National Health Portal, will improve healthcare delivery. Tamil Nadu's TNHIE network facilitates seamless data exchange, a model worth expanding nationwide

Promotion of Traditional and Alternative Medicine: Promoting traditional and alternative medicine in India requires a holistic approach involving policy support, research, education, healthcare integration, public awareness, quality control, and international collaboration. The Government of India, through the Ministry of AYUSH, develops policies to recognise and promote Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy (AYUSH), supported by institutions like the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) for research validation. Education is enhanced via the National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA), and AYUSH services are integrated into the National Health Mission (NHM). As exemplified by the International Day of Yoga, public awareness educates on its benefits. Quality control is ensured through standards like the Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India (API). Integrating AYUSH services into the National Health Mission has shown promising results in promoting holistic healthcare. The International Day of Yoga is an excellent example of raising public awareness. Internationally, collaborations promote global recognition through events such as the World Ayurveda Congress. These efforts collectively advance the integration and accessibility of traditional and alternative medicine across India's healthcare landscape. (10)

Maternal and Child Health Programs: Ensuring universal access to high-quality antenatal care under the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) is crucial. This program offers free check-ups to pregnant women, significantly improving maternal and child health outcomes. Strengthening maternal and child health programs is paramount for enhancing healthcare outcomes and reducing mortality rates in India. The Government of India can bolster these efforts through several strategic initiatives. First, ensuring universal access to high-quality antenatal care (ANC) under schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) offers monthly free check-ups to pregnant women. Promoting institutional deliveries via the

Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) incentivises women with cash assistance and accessible transportation, thus increasing safe births attended by skilled personnel. Strengthening postnatal care through the Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK) ensures mothers and newborns receive essential healthcare up to 42 days post-delivery. Nutrition interventions through the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) address malnutrition among pregnant women and young children. Robust immunisation programs like the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP) safeguard against vaccine-preventable diseases for mothers and children. Family planning services, facilitated by the Family Planning Indemnity Scheme (FPIS), promote contraceptive use and reproductive health choices. Initiatives such as LaQshya aim to improve childbirth care quality. At the same time, community involvement through programs like the Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) ensures grassroots participation and support. By strengthening these programs, India can significantly enhance maternal and child health outcomes, advancing national and global health goals. (11)

Healthcare Financing Reforms: Improving healthcare financing in India is crucial for equitable access and universal health coverage. Key reforms include increasing public health spending through NHM, expanding AB-PMJAY for insurance coverage, and introducing innovative financing like RSBY. Encouraging PPPs under PMPPP enhances service delivery, while PMSSY strengthens healthcare infrastructure. Value-based models and bundled payments under AB-PMJAY promote quality care alongside Digital India's governance improvements. DHR's research investments drive innovative solutions. These reforms aim to boost healthcare delivery access, quality, and efficiency, advancing overall health outcomes and socioeconomic development nationwide. (12) Increasing public health spending and expanding AB-PMJAY for insurance coverage can enhance equitable access. Public-private

partnerships have successfully improved service delivery in several Indian states.

Quality Assurance and Accreditation: Strengthening bodies like NQAS, NABH and NABL to set and assess standards for healthcare providers ensures safety and effectiveness. Mandating accreditation for NHM program participation can elevate healthcare standards. Mandating certification of involvement in NHM programs ensures quality in public and private healthcare facilities. Capacity building for providers and assessors through NABH's training programs boosts quality management skills. Initiatives like Swachh Swasth Sarvatra promote cleanliness and infection control. Patient feedback mechanisms and satisfaction surveys under NABH standards drive patient-centred care and continuous improvement. Peer review assessments and benchmarking facilitate best practice sharing. Integrating quality standards into healthcare policies and providing incentives for accreditation achievements ensure adherence and excellence. These efforts will elevate healthcare standards, enhance patient outcomes, and foster greater trust in healthcare services across India. (13)

Research and Development in Healthcare: Increasing funding for healthcare R&D through the DHR and fostering public-private partnerships can drive innovation. Streamlining clinical trial regulations and enhancing transparency will encourage new treatment evaluations. Strengthening institutions like the ICMR and fostering PPPs via BIRAC will drive interdisciplinary biotechnology research. Prioritising funding for infectious diseases and NCDs under programs like Global Health Research Core Grants is crucial. Investing in capacity building through DBT-supported training and fellowships will develop a skilled workforce. Facilitating technology transfer via TBIs will promote healthcare innovations. Streamlining clinical trial regulations and enhancing transparency with CTRI will encourage new treatment evaluations. Collaborating internationally through initiatives like Indo-US

VAP and Indo-UK Health Research will enhance global knowledge exchange. These steps will create a conducive environment for healthcare R&D, fostering innovation and improving health outcomes nationwide. (14)

Tobacco Control and Anti-Smoking Campaigns: Accelerating tobacco control by enforcing COTPA and increasing taxes on tobacco products can deter consumption. NTCP-led campaigns should continue to educate the public on the risks of tobacco use. NTCP-led campaigns educate on tobacco risks and cessation. School initiatives like Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions curb youth smoking. Accessible services such as the National Tobacco Quitline aid cessation efforts. Advocating smoke-free workplaces cuts second-hand smoke exposure. Partnering with NGOs like VHAI garners community support for tobacco policies. Strengthening bans on tobacco advertising across media prevents product promotion, which is vital for lowering tobacco-related illness and death rates and enhancing public health in India. (15)

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Programs: Investing in water supply and sanitation infrastructure through initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Mission can prevent disease. The Jal Jeevan Mission aims to connect tap water to rural households, focusing on water quality monitoring and community engagement. The Government of India can enhance these programs by investing in water supply, sanitation, and sewage treatment infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, through initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM). Programs like the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) aim to connect tap water to rural households, focusing on water quality monitoring and community engagement. Urban areas benefit from infrastructure upgrades under schemes like the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT). Community-led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approaches empower communities to achieve open defecation-free status, previously supported by the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA). Hygiene promotion

campaigns, integrated into initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (SBA), emphasise hand washing and menstrual hygiene. Strengthening water quality monitoring systems, integrating WASH into healthcare and education, and investing in research and innovation are crucial steps to enhance WASH programs nationwide, ensuring better health outcomes and well-being for all. (16)

Geriatric Care and Elderly Health Services: Establishing specialised centres like AIIMS Delhi, NII and CoEs for comprehensive elderly healthcare and training healthcare professionals via NISD will enhance geriatric care. The NHM's Mobile Medical Units can extend primary care to rural areas. Training healthcare professionals via NISD enhances geriatric expertise. NHM's Mobile Medical Units extend primary care to rural areas. NPHCE integrates health and social care services, including telemedicine via e-Sanjeevani. Preventive health services under NPHCE include screenings and education. IGNOPAS provides financial support, and ICMR and DST research informs policy. These initiatives aim to enhance elderly health outcomes and effectively address India's ageing population's diverse needs. (17)

New Ideas for Transforming Healthcare in India: The new Indian government must build a resilient, inclusive, high-quality healthcare system for 2024-2029. By focusing on universal health coverage, strengthening primary healthcare, addressing human resource challenges, embracing digital health, prioritising prevention and wellness, and breaking mental health barriers, India can ensure a healthier future for all its citizens. Implementing these strategies will transform the healthcare landscape, making quality healthcare accessible to everyone and driving the nation towards a healthier tomorrow. The government of India can introduce several innovative ideas to revolutionise the healthcare sector. Here are some actionable suggestions:

- ❖ **Healthcare Technology Innovation Hubs**: Establishing hubs focused on health tech startups. These hubs will provide crucial funding, mentorship, and resources to foster entrepreneurship and drive innovation in healthcare. We can create a dynamic environment for healthcare advancements by supporting new ideas and technologies.
- ❖ **National Digital Health Platform**: Creating a comprehensive platform integrating electronic health records, telemedicine services, health analytics, and patient engagement tools. This platform will streamline healthcare delivery, improve provider coordination, and empower patients with easy access to their health information and telemedicine consultations.
- ❖ **Empowering Community Health Workers**: Training and equipping community health workers with digital tools and offer incentives. By enhancing their skills and resources, especially in rural areas, we can make healthcare more accessible and practical. These workers can provide essential services, track health data, and educate communities on preventive care.
- ❖ **Healthcare AI and Data Analytics**: Investing in artificial intelligence and data analytics to analyse large health datasets, improving diagnostic accuracy and allowing for personalised treatment plans. By leveraging AI, we can identify patterns, predict outbreaks, and tailor healthcare interventions to individual needs.
- ❖ **Public-Private Partnerships for Health Innovation**: Encouraging collaboration between the public and private sectors to address complex health challenges. By leveraging the strengths and resources of both sectors, we can develop innovative solutions, enhance healthcare delivery, and bring advanced technologies to the forefront.
- ❖ **Health Impact Bonds**: These bonds attract private investment for healthcare interventions with measurable outcomes. They drive funding into practical health projects, ensuring that investments lead to tangible improvements in health metrics and outcomes.

- **Expanding Telehealth and Remote Monitoring**: Expanding telehealth services and remote monitoring capabilities will improve healthcare access for remote and underserved populations, which may allow patients to receive medical consultations and monitoring from the comfort of their homes, reducing the need for travel and hospital visits.

- **Healthcare Block chain Solutions**: Exploring the use of blockchain technology to improve data privacy and streamline medical records management. Blockchain can provide secure, tamper-proof storage of health records, ensuring patient confidentiality and facilitating seamless data sharing among healthcare providers.

- **Integrating Mental Health Services**: Integrating mental health services into primary healthcare settings to reduce stigma and improve access. By making mental health care a standard part of primary care, we can ensure early detection, timely intervention, and holistic treatment for mental health conditions.

- **Healthcare Innovation Challenges**: National innovation challenges and competitions can stimulate creativity and generate novel solutions to health issues. These challenges can bring together innovators, researchers, and entrepreneurs to develop cutting-edge technologies and practices in healthcare.

- **Mobile Health Clinics**: Deploying mobile clinics equipped with diagnostic tools and telemedicine capabilities to bring essential services to underserved communities. These clinics can travel to remote areas, providing screenings, vaccinations, and medical consultations to those lacking healthcare facilities.

- **Holistic Wellness Centers**: Promoting a comprehensive approach to health by offering integrated services at wellness centres. These centres can provide physical, mental, and preventive health services, encouraging a holistic well-being and disease prevention approach.

- **Tailored Healthcare Solutions for Urban Slums**: Customised solutions can address the unique healthcare challenges in urban slums. By focusing on these communities' specific needs, we can improve sanitation and access to clean water and provide targeted health education and services.

- **Health Literacy Campaigns**: Raising awareness about preventive health measures through targeted campaigns for marginalised communities. Educating the public about healthy practices, nutrition, and disease prevention can empower individuals to take charge of their health.

- **Community-Based Health Financing Models**: Community financing schemes can mobilise resources and protect against catastrophic health expenses. These models can pool resources within communities to provide financial support for health emergencies and routine care.

- **Promoting Healthcare Tourism**: Focusing on high-quality healthcare services to boost the economy and attract international patients. Developing specialised treatment centres and ensuring high standards can make India a preferred destination for medical tourists.

- **Healthcare Innovation Zones**: Fostering collaboration and accelerate the development of innovative technologies in designated zones. These zones can provide a supportive environment for research and development, bringing together academia, industry, and healthcare providers.

- **Elderly Care Innovation Grants**: Addressing the needs of India's ageing population by offering grants for innovative elderly care solutions. These grants can support the development of new technologies, services, and programs tailored to older people.

- **Digital Health Literacy Programs**: Educating individuals on using digital health tools to improve health management. By increasing digital literacy, we can ensure that more people can access and benefit from telemedicine, health apps, and online health resources.

- **Health Equity Impact Assessments**: Comprehensive assessments can identify and address health inequities. These assessments can help policymakers understand and tackle healthcare access and outcomes disparities, ensuring that all population groups receive equitable care.

- **Peer-to-Peer Healthcare Support Networks**: Organised networks provide mutual support for patients with chronic diseases. These networks can facilitate sharing experiences, provide emotional support, and offer practical advice for managing chronic conditions.

- **Healthcare Infrastructure Investment Bonds**: Mobilising private capital to develop healthcare infrastructure with targeted investment bonds. These bonds can fund the construction of hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare facilities, particularly in underserved areas.

- **Healthy Cities Initiative**: Promoting urban planning that prioritises health through a nationwide initiative. By designing cities with health in mind, we can create environments that encourage physical activity, reduce pollution, and improve overall quality of life.

- **Biomedical Research Consortia**: Tackling pressing health challenges through interdisciplinary research collaborations. By bringing together researchers from different fields, we can advance our understanding of diseases and develop new treatments and technologies.

- **Blockchain for Supply Chain Management**: Blockchain technology can improve transparency and efficiency in healthcare supply chains, ensuring their integrity, reducing fraud, and enhancing the traceability of medical supplies and pharmaceuticals.

- **Healthcare Waste Management Innovation Grants**: Developing solutions to reduce the environmental impact of healthcare facilities through targeted grants. These grants can support projects that manage and reduce healthcare waste, promoting sustainability in the health sector.

- **Medical Tourism Accreditation Program**: Ensuring quality standards and patient safety in medical tourism through an accreditation program, building trust and attracting more international patients to India's healthcare facilities.

- **Digital Health Passport System**: Introducing a secure system to store health records and facilitate safe travel for patients. A digital health passport can streamline access to health information and support international travel and treatment.

- **Gamified Health Promotion Apps**: Engaging, gamified applications can encourage healthy behaviours. These apps can make health education fun and interactive, enabling users to adopt healthier lifestyles.

- **Health Equity Investment Fund**: Supporting projects to reduce health disparities with a dedicated investment fund. This fund can back initiatives that promote equitable healthcare access and improve health outcomes for underserved populations.

Implementing these innovative ideas will transform India's healthcare landscape, drive positive health outcomes, and enhance the population's well-being. By embracing creativity, collaboration, and technology, the Indian government can build a more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable healthcare system for the future.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST
There are no conflicts of interest.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS
Generative AI and AI Assisted Technologies have been used to check grammatical and language errors. However, the authors take full responsibility of the content.

REFERENCES

1. Witthayapipopsakul W, Kulthanmanusorn A, Patcharanarumol W, Suphanchaimat R, Kanchanachitra C, Soucat A, et al. Accelerating universal health coverage: a call for papers. Bull World Health Organ. 2019;97(3):171-171A.

2. In search of a fix to the primary health care chasm in India: can institutionalising a public health cadre and inducting family physicians be the answer? - The Lancet Regional Health - Southeast Asia [Internet]. [cited 2024 Jun 25]. Available from: https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lansea/article/PIIS2772-3682(23)00057-4/fulltext

3. Human Resources for Health in India: Strategic Options for Transforming Health Systems Towards Improving Health Service Delivery and Public Health - Sanjay Zodpey, Himanshu Negandhi, Ritika Tiwari, 2021 [Internet]. [cited 2024 Jun 25]. Available from: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0972063421995005

4. Al Dahdah M, Mishra RK. Digital health for all: The turn to digitised healthcare in India. Soc Sci Med 1982. 2023;319:114968.

5. Lahariya C. Health & Wellness Centers to Strengthen Primary Health Care in India: Concept, Progress and Ways Forward. Indian J Pediatr. 2020;87(11):916–29.

6. Pavitra KS. Breaking the barriers--the challenges in mental health care in India. Seishin Shinkeigaku Zasshi. 2010;112(2):126–32.

7. Banerjee A. Non-communicable diseases in India: Challenges and the way forward. J Postgrad Med. 2019;65(1):5–6.

8. Kamthan M. The Need for Health Emergency Law in India. In: Singh A, editor. International Handbook of Disaster Research [Internet]. Singapore: Springer Nature; 2023 [cited 2024 Jun 25]. p. 1715–23.

Available from: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-8388-7_11

9. Faujdar DS, Sahay S, Singh T, Jindal H, Kumar R. Public health information systems for primary health care in India: A situational analysis study. J Fam Med Prim Care. 2019;8(11):3640–6.

10. Shi Y, Zhang C, Li X. Traditional medicine in India. J Tradit Chin Med Sci. 2021;8:S51–5.

11. Singh S. Maternal and child health services in India -- past, present and future. Indian J Matern Child Health Off Publ Indian Matern Child Health Assoc. 1997;8(1):1–4.

12. Atim C, Bhushan I, Blecher M, Gandham R, Rajan V, Davén J, et al. Health financing reforms for Universal Health Coverage in five emerging economies. J Glob Health. 11:16005.

13. SpringerLink [Internet]. [cited 2024 Jun 25]. Accreditation and Quality Assurance. Available from: https://link.springer.com/journal/769

14. Clinical trials and healthcare needs in India: A tricky balancing act, but opportunities abound! - PMC [Internet]. [cited 2024 Jun 25]. Available from: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5654213/

15. Kajanoja J, Scheinin NM, Karukivi M, Karlsson L, Karlsson H. Alcohol and tobacco use in men: the role of alexithymia and externally oriented thinking style. Am J Drug Alcohol Abuse. 2019;45(2):199–207.

16. Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Practices Among Households in Perambalur District: A Cross-Sectional Study - PMC [Internet]. [cited 2024 Jun 25]. Available from: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9643017/

17. Tripathy JP. Geriatric care in India: A long way to go. J -Life Health. 2014;5(4):205–6.