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Health Budget 2023: Highlights

The Union Finance Minister presented the last budget of the second term of the Modi government on 1st February, 2023. The Union Budget 2023-24 has a strong focus on health care and the environment, which we welcome at Heart Care Foundation of India. We welcome the increased focus on health care research, which will enable us to be better prepared to tackle all new and unknown illnesses that we may be threatened by in the future.

One Health was a concept that our founding president Dr KK Aggarwal strongly focused on and the provisions in the budget to help achieve net zero emissions by 2070 through the adoption of more energy-efficient ways of travel and fuel consumption will have a great impact on our overall physical well-being as well.

Promoting nursing education through the **setting up of 157 new nursing colleges** will help make quality care accessible to a larger population.

We hoped to see more focus on training centers on heart disease and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in the budget given the drastic increase in the number of heart attacks among the younger population in India. Metabolic diseases deserve specific attention as well given the pandemic proportions of these diseases due to the high-stress and unhealthy lifestyle that the population at large is now leading. The government **campaign to promote millets** for their numerous health and environmental benefits will help check the metabolic disease such as diabetes in check to an extent. The Hyderabad-based Indian Institute of Millet Research (IIMR) will be supported as a centre of excellence to make India the "global hub" for millets.

Mental health has come to the fore with COVID-19 in mammoth proportions and deserved to be given more priority in the budget as well.

We hope that skill development initiatives and multi-disciplinary courses for medical devices would promote self-dependence or "atmanirbharta" in medical devices and equipments among other things.

Here are some key health-related highlights of the budget 2023.

- Launch of a **mission to eliminate sickle cell anemia by 2047** by creating awareness and universal screening of 7 crore people in 0 to 40 years age group in affected tribal areas.
- Select **ICMR labs will be available for research** by public and private medical college faculty and private sector R&D teams for encouraging collaborative research and innovation.
- Launch of a **new program to promote research and innovation in pharmaceuticals**.
- **Three centres of excellence of artificial intelligence (AI)** will be set up to in top educational institutions, leading industry players will partner in conducting interdisciplinary research, develop cutting edge applications and scalable problem solutions in the areas of health, agriculture and sustainable system.
- **30 skill India international centers** will be set up across various states. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) 4.0 will be launched to skill lakhs of youth within the next 3 years. It will cover courses for Industry 4.0, COVID, AI, robotics, mechatronics, IoT and drones.

- **Dedicated multidisciplinary courses for medical devices** will be supported in existing institutions to ensure availability of skilled manpower for futuristic medical technologies, high-end manufacturing and research.
- Cigarettes have become expensive. A welcome step as India bears a high burden of tobacco-related diseases being the second largest consumer and producer of tobacco.
- The budget allocation for **Jal Jeevan Mission** has been substantially increased to Rs. 50,000 crore. Rs. 2.87 trillion has been announced for the launch of the Jal Jeevan Mission Urban. It aims at universal water supply in all 4,378 urban local bodies with 2.86 crore household tap connections as well as liquid waste management. The target of ongoing Har Ghar Jal mission is to supply water to all rural households by 2024.
- The budget has lot of initiatives for **green growth**, which should bode well for the environment and indirectly to health. Under the **National Green Hydrogen Mission** aiming to move towards a low-carbon intensity economy and reducing dependence on fossil fuel imports, India is targeting to reach an annual production of 5 MMT of green hydrogen by 2030. To promote circular economy, **500 new 'waste to wealth' plants** will

be established under GOBARDhan (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan) scheme.

- Substantial benefits have been announced for **personal income tax**. This will definitely reduce stress among the common people, especially the middle class. A new tax regime has been introduced. The number of slabs has been reduced to five. Under the new tax regime, the **tax rebate limit has been increased to 7 lakhs from the earlier 5 lakhs**. **Tax exemption limit has been increased to Rs. 3 lakh**.

The new tax rates

Total income (Rs.)	Rate (%)
Up to 0-3 lakh	Nil
From 3-6 lakh	5
From 6-9 lakh	10
From 9-12 lakh	15
From 12-15 lakh	20
Above 15 lakh	30

In 2022-23, the expenditure in health sector was 2.1% of the gross domestic product (GDP) as per the Economic Survey 2023. The National Health Policy 2017 has envisaged increasing the government's health expenditure to 2.5% of GDP by 2025. Reaching this target appears elusive.



Nondiabetic Kidney Disease in Patients with Type 2 Diabetes

A study published in the *British Medical Journal* revealed that patients with type 2 diabetes develop kidney disease in 18.2% of cases due to other reasons. The study was conducted by a group of doctors from the state-run Institute of Post-Graduate Medical Education and Research (IPGMER). The study is titled, "Prevalence of nondiabetic kidney disease and the inability of clinical predictors to differentiate it from diabetic kidney disease: results from a prospectively performed renal biopsy." Dr Sujoy Ghosh, Professor of Endocrinology at IPGMER, stated that the true prevalence of diabetic kidney disease and nondiabetic kidney disease is unknown. He added that most of the published medical literature derives its data from a retrospective analysis of biopsy studies.

In the study, 6,247 patients from two departments, i.e., endocrinology and nephrology, were screened for type 2 diabetes. Only 869 patients fulfilled the inclusion criteria, out of whom only 818 were feasible for renal biopsy. Only 110 patients, however, agreed to a renal biopsy. The findings of the study showed that 73 patients (66.4%) had diabetic kidney disease. The study showed that only 20 patients (18.2%) had nondiabetic kidney disease, whereas 17 patients (15.4%) were found to have mixed kidney disease.

Hence, the researchers concluded that nondiabetic kidney disease and mixed kidney disease in type 2 diabetes mellitus with renal involvement are very common. They added that clinical decision-making in these cases is impaired by the traditionally used parameters. Additionally, the study highlighted the limitations of currently used indicators for differentiating between nondiabetic kidney disease and diabetic kidney disease. (Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/education/news/study-finds-high-prevalence-of-non-diabetic-kidney-disease-in-patients-with-type-2-diabetes-mellitus/articleshowprint/96686351.cms?val=3728>)

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