# HEALTHCARE ROUNDUP FOR

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AVIAN HEALTHCARE E-NEWSLETTER

## Health Ministry issues guidelines to curb overcharging by CGHS hospitals

On 7th January 2025, the Health Ministry introduced new guidelines to address complaints of overcharging and denial of treatment by hospitals empanelled under the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS). These measures aimed to enhance transparency, standardisation, and accountability in healthcare services for beneficiaries.

The guidelines mandated that empanelled hospitals follow uniform treatment protocols for common procedures and ailments, ensuring consistent care. Transparent pricing was emphasized, requiring hospitals to display CGHS-approved rates for all services, enabling beneficiaries to understand costs and avoid hidden charges. Additionally, costly procedures necessitated prior approval from CGHS to prevent unnecessary treatments.

To improve accountability, hospitals were instructed to report and justify any denial of treatment to CGHS. Non-compliance with the guidelines could lead to penalties, including delisting from the CGHS network.

In cases involving patient death or coma, hospitals were required to include the patient attendant's signatures and mobile numbers on final bills for services like daycare, laboratory tests, and dialysis. Hospitals also had to notify the CGHS additional director's office via email within 24 hours about non-referral cases, emergency admissions, and consultations. These guidelines sought to protect beneficiaries by ensuring ethical practices, transparency, and quality care under the CGHS framework.

# Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlights genome sequencing's role in shaping India's genetic insights

On 9th January 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated the completion of the Genome India Project, describing it as a historic achievement in biotechnology with the potential to revolutionize healthcare and genetic research. The project involved sequencing the genomes of 10,000 Indians, offering a comprehensive view of the nation's genetic diversity. Despite challenges posed by COVID-19, scientists successfully gathered this critical data, which is now housed at the Indian Biological Data Centre.

The project aimed to provide insights into India's diverse genetic landscape, aiding policymakers, researchers, and healthcare professionals in designing targeted interventions. PM Modi emphasized its importance in understanding the genetic basis of diseases and developing personalized medical solutions, particularly for conditions like sickle cell anemia, which disproportionately affects tribal communities.

He highlighted that India's bioeconomy had grown significantly, from $10 billion in 2014 to over $150 billion, driven by advancements in biotechnology and public healthcare initiatives. He also acknowledged India's global pharmaceutical leadership and the successes of programs like Jan Aushadhi Kendras and free treatment schemes. Launched in January 2020 and funded by the Department of Biotechnology, the Genome India Project aimed to create a genetic reference database, paving the way for precision medicine and transformative healthcare solutions for India's diverse population.

## FSSAI food labelling amendments to take effect from July 1

On 16th January 2025, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) announced that amendments to the Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020, would be enforced annually starting July 1. A minimum implementation period of 180 days from the date of notification was mandated for changes under these or other related Food Safety and Standards (FSS) regulations.

This decision addressed operational challenges faced by Food Business Operators (FBOs), including the costs and logistical hurdles of implementing new regulations and issues with pre-printed packaging materials. By synchronizing enforcement dates with the financial year, FSSAI aimed to provide FBOs with a predictable framework for compliance. The measure also allowed businesses to use existing packaging materials for longer periods, minimizing operational disruptions and reducing waste.

The revised schedule was designed to enhance transparency for consumers by ensuring that food labels consistently reflected accurate and updated information. The changes were intended to streamline compliance processes and facilitate smoother transitions for FBOs. Overall, this approach was expected to balance regulatory requirements with industry needs, while also improving consumer confidence in the accuracy and reliability of food labelling practices.


# Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda calls for industry-academia roadmap to boost healthcare, med-tech growth

Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda urged industry and academia to propose a roadmap for improving healthcare services in India during the second edition of the IIMA Healthcare Summit, held at the Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad (IIMA) on 18th January 2025. The event, organized by the Centre for Management of Health Services (CMHS) and the IIMA Healthcare Alumni Special Interest Group (ASIG), focused on the theme "Advancing Healthcare for India @ 2047."

Mr. Nadda highlighted India's significant healthcare advancements over the past decade, including the expansion of medical infrastructure through initiatives like Ayushman Bharat and Mission Indradhanush. He noted the country's success in reducing malaria cases, responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and increasing the number of AIIMS institutions and medical colleges. The minister also emphasized India's global leadership in affordable medicines and vaccines, supplying 20% of the world's generic drugs and 60% of vaccines.

He called on academia and industry to collaborate on research, policy innovations, and joint ventures, assuring government support for their implementation. Mr. Nadda also recognized winners of a pre-summit healthcare hackathon on themes like "Digital Strategies for Universal Health Coverage by 2047" and "Managing Non-Communicable Diseases by 2047." The event highlighted India's commitment to accessible, innovative, and sustainable healthcare solutions.

# Empowering hospital leaders through MedLern & NATHEALTH's Digital Health Master Class workshop series

On 21st January 2025, MedLern and NATHEALTH announced the launch of the Digital Health Master Class (DHMC), a workshop series designed to accelerate digital technology adoption in hospitals across India. The initiative was set to take place in over 50 cities, beginning with Hyderabad, Indore, Raipur, and Nagpur. Developed by Koita Foundation and PwC, and sponsored by NATHEALTH, the programme specifically targeted hospital leaders considering digital transformation.

The DHMC provided a comprehensive approach to digital healthcare leadership, equipping hospital leaders with tools to streamline operations, enhance patient care, and drive financial growth. The course covered key aspects of digital transformation, including the adoption of advanced technologies, strategic implementation, and leadership strategies for effective digital change.

Deepak Sharma, Co-Founder & CEO of MedLern, emphasized that the programme aimed to build a digitally empowered healthcare ecosystem by addressing long-term benefits and risk apprehensions associated with digital adoption. Meanwhile, Siddhartha Bhattacharya, Secretary-General of NATHEALTH, highlighted that digital transformation had become a necessity for Indian healthcare providers.

The initiative focused on implementing HMIS, EMR, telemedicine, and patient portals, enabling hospitals to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and align with the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM). Ultimately, DHMC aimed to empower hospitals with actionable strategies for successful digital transformation.

# Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone hosts National Conference on enhancing pharmaceutical quality through GMP

A national conference on “Enhancing Pharmaceutical Quality Assurance through Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)” was held at the Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone (AMTZ) on 23rd January 2025. Organized by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) in collaboration with the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, and AMTZ, the event emphasized the critical role of GMP in ensuring safe, effective, and high-quality pharmaceutical products.

The discussions highlighted that GMP was more than just a regulatory requirement, serving as a comprehensive framework for maintaining product safety and efficacy. Industry leaders highlighted the need for standardization, meticulous documentation, and strong quality control to minimize risks such as contamination and defects. Experts also stressed the integration of new technologies with GMP to enhance manufacturing efficiency and align with global standards.

Key speakers, including Dr Nasir Jamal, Dr Jitendra Sharma, and Dharmendra Kumar Yadav, addressed the role of GMP in attracting investments and strengthening India’s pharmaceutical sector. The conference also featured a detailed presentation on the RPTUAS scheme by Yashwant Shinde from SIDBI, focusing on its benefits for technological advancements.

Overall, the event reinforced a unified commitment to pharmaceutical quality assurance, innovation, and global competitiveness, ensuring that India’s pharma industry continues to thrive.

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