



INDIA

BRIDGING THE GAP

Advancing Integrated Prostate Cancer Care in India

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

India's prostate cancer care system is at Level 3 – Mature, with established treatment centers, growing diagnostic capacity, and a strong base of medical expertise. However, disparities persist between urban and rural areas, screening coverage remains inconsistent, and access to advanced therapies is often dependent on affordability. While leading tertiary hospitals and cancer centers follow international protocols, the lack of a nationwide organized screening program and uneven access to molecular diagnostics limit the system's ability to detect and treat prostate cancer early.

This policy brief reviews the current status of prostate cancer care in India and outlines targeted actions to bridge gaps and improve equity.

INTRODUCTION

Leveraging a Strong Medical Infrastructure for Broader Access

India has seen steady growth in oncology infrastructure, with centers of excellence such as Tata Memorial Hospital, AIIMS, and state cancer institutes offering comprehensive prostate cancer care. Urban regions benefit from advanced diagnostics, surgical expertise, radiotherapy, and access to newer treatments.

Yet, the rural majority faces delayed diagnosis due to limited awareness, absence of systematic screening, and insufficient oncology services. With a **Level 3 – Mature** maturity level, India is well-positioned to expand equitable access and standardize care across the country.



India Ranks at Level 3 – Mature Prostate Cancer Maturity Framework



PROSTATE CANCER IN INDIA

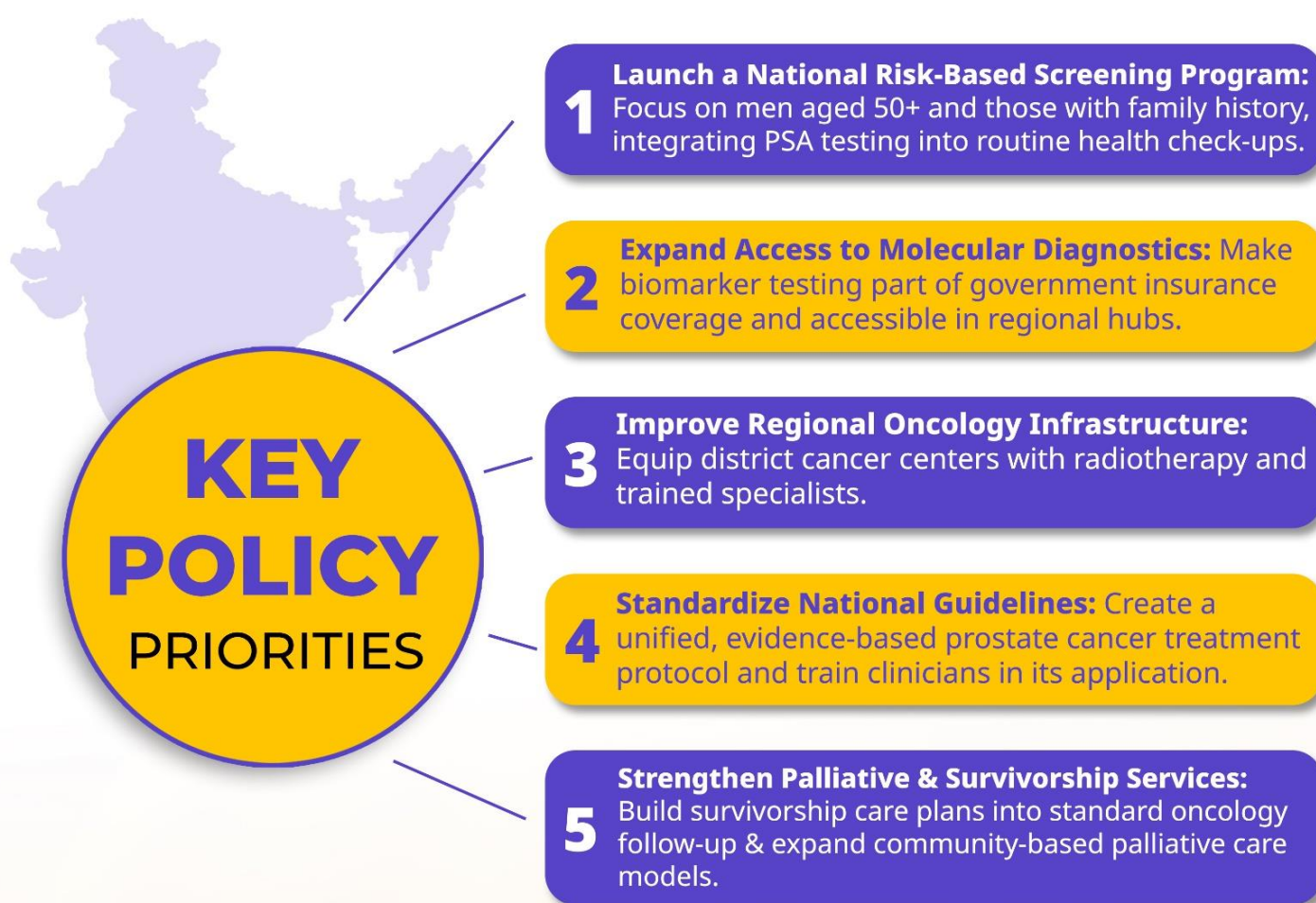
Current Landscape and Strategic Gaps

Pillar	Current Status	Strength	Policy Action
Early Detection & Diagnosis	No national screening program; detection is mostly symptom-driven, though PSA testing is widely available in urban centers.	Growing public awareness in cities; private labs offer PSA testing nationwide.	Introduce a risk-based national screening program for men aged 50+; deploy mobile diagnostic units for rural outreach.
Biomarker & Molecular Testing	Available in leading cancer centers and private labs; cost is a barrier for low-income patients.	Advanced molecular diagnostics available at major institutions.	Include biomarker testing in government insurance schemes; expand access to regional diagnostic hubs.
Treatment Access	Comprehensive treatment (surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, hormonal therapy) available in metro cities; uneven distribution in smaller towns.	Well-trained oncologists and surgeons in tertiary hospitals.	Strengthen regional cancer centers with radiotherapy units; increase government funding for treatment subsidies.
Clinical Guidelines	Most major hospitals follow international or NCCN guidelines; no single nationally mandated prostate cancer protocol.	Existing adherence to high standards in top institutions.	Develop and implement a unified national prostate cancer guideline; ensure dissemination to all levels of care.
Palliative & Survivorship Care	Palliative care networks are expanding, with NGOs and state programs supporting pain management; survivorship programs remain limited.	Kerala's community palliative model is a global example.	Scale up community-based palliative models nationwide; integrate survivorship counseling in oncology centers.



CONCLUSION & Call to Action

India has the expertise and infrastructure to further strengthen prostate cancer care and move toward **Level 4 – Advanced** maturity. The main challenge lies in ensuring that rural and economically disadvantaged populations benefit from the same quality of care as urban patients.



CONCLUSION

India's **Level 3 – Mature** prostate cancer system demonstrates strong capabilities but also clear inequities. Urban centers offer world-class care, yet rural patients often face delayed diagnosis and limited treatment options. By implementing a coordinated national strategy—covering screening, diagnostics, treatment, and survivorship—India can close the urban-rural gap, improve early detection rates, and increase survival outcomes. Leveraging public-private partnerships, expanding government insurance coverage, and investing in regional cancer infrastructure will be key to ensuring that every man in India has timely and affordable access to prostate cancer care.