



We need an affordable healthcare revenue model to meet challenges of modern day lifestyle: Vice President

Addresses 11th Global Healthcare Summit-2017 in Kolkata

Posted On: 30 DEC 2017 8:39PM by PIB Delhi

The Vice President of India, Shri. M. Venkaiah Naidu has said that we need an affordable health care revenue model to meet the challenges of modern day lifestyle. He was addressing the 11th Global Health Care Summit - 2017, organized by the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI), in Kolkata today. The Governor of West Bengal, Shri Keshri Nath Tripathi, the Minister for Urban Development, West Bengal, Firhad Hakim and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

The Vice president said that while India is progressing economically and incomes of people are improving, the common man is unable to meet the medical bill whenever there is a medical emergency in the family. With penetration of health insurance remaining quite low and majority of the Indian population preferring to seek medical treatment from private sector in health emergencies by spending from their own pockets, this problem gets compounded, he added.

The Vice President called on the medical fraternity to put in efforts to bring down the costs of medical devices to make healthcare affordable. He further said that youngsters are increasingly falling prey to ailments due to a variety of factors, including sedentary lifestyle, improper dietary habits and job-related stresses.

The Vice President said that one of the major challenges facing India is the growing incidence of diabetes in the general population and this trend needs to be arrested. He quoted a study saying diabetes was becoming common among lower socio-economic groups living in urban regions of more developed States and this is a matter of concern.

Following is the text of Vice President's address:

"I am happy to participate in the valedictory session of the 11th Global Health Care Summit-2017, organized by the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI).

I am also glad to know that AAPI's mission for India is to play an important role in making quality healthcare accessible and affordable to all people of India. It is indeed a laudable objective as both accessibility and affordability are the need of the hour, especially in a vast developing country like India with a huge population of middle class and lower middle class.

Friends, I am sure that you all are aware of how the modern day lifestyles and stress are leading to serious health ailments among people. What is a matter of real concern is that youngsters are increasingly falling prey to these ailments due to a variety of factors, including sedentary lifestyle, improper dietary habits and job-related stress.

One of the major challenges facing India is the growing incidence of diabetes in the general population. This trend needs to be arrested. A study earlier this year stated that diabetes was becoming common among lower socio-economic groups living in urban regions of more developed States. This is a matter of concern. According to International Diabetes Federation, 415 million people have diabetes in the world and there were 69.1 million cases in India as per 2015 data.

Another study has noted how India's burden of diseases has shifted from communicable diseases to non-communicable diseases as incomes rose over the last 26 years. More deaths (61.8 per cent) were caused by non-communicable diseases such as cardio-vascular diseases and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in 2016 as against 53.6 per cent deaths due to communicable, maternal, neonatal and nutritional diseases in 1990.

I have just quoted these studies to drive home the point on the need to create greater awareness among the people, particularly the youth, on the dangers of sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy dietary habits like eating junk food as prevention is the best cure.

I am happy to know that AAPI's mission for India is to play an important role in "making quality healthcare accessible and affordable to all people of India". Making healthcare affordable to Indian masses is the most pressing need and there cannot be two opinions on this. Bodies like AAPI must help in promoting the use of telemedicine in remote rural areas which lack access to healthcare facilities. Telemedicine can be used effectively in radiology, cardiology, oncology, dermatology and a few other areas. It will help in reducing unnecessary visits to the hospitals for consultations with specialists and avoiding long distance travel.

Telemedicine to some extent will also help in overcoming one of the major problems faced by the country-- the shortage of physicians and specialists.

Friends, while India is progressing economically and incomes of people are improving, the common man is unable to meet the medical bill whenever there is a medical emergency in the family. With penetration of health insurance remaining quite low and majority of the Indian population preferring to seek medical treatment from private sector in health emergencies by spending from their own pockets, this problem gets compounded. The time has come for India to find some kind of healthcare revenue model that is truly affordable or does not cast a financial burden on the middle classes and the poorer sections.

Reducing IMRs, MMRs, improving maternal health, combating the problem of anaemia among Indian women and improving sanitation are some of the major health issues that need to be addressed on a war footing. Bringing down the costs of medical devices to make healthcare affordable is another important issue that needs to be looked into by all the stakeholders.

Apart from conducting CMEs, seminars and workshops, AAPI must consider collaborating with various governments and other private organizations in establishing a state-of-the-art healthcare facility in each district of the country where affordable treatment is dispensed.

Thank You and Jai Hind!"

BK/RK

(Release ID: 1514782) Visitor Counter : 1187

