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For the people living in the urban parts of India, healthcare is a very small issue.

According to them India faces a lot of otherissues that are more important than healthcare such as such as economicdevelopment, infrastructure, jobs, and border disputes with Pakistan. 1. Rural Versus Urban Divide: At the same time the chanceto enter the market may be extremely ripe, India at present gives just around4. 2% of its national GDP towards medication and healthcare facilities(compared to 18% by the US). Additionally, there is also a huge differencebetween the rural and urban health care which makes the problem worse. 7-% ofthe total population of India still lives in rural areas and a very less accessto adequate healthcare and medication. Most of the people who are below povertyline rely on government healthcare facilities. One of such government approvedhealthcare program is National Urban Health Mission which has been proven ineffective.

While the urban centres have a large number of private hospitals whichprovide good quality services but at a very high price which is not affordableto many. These healthcare facilities have better doctors, access to almostall-important medicines and better clinics. 2. Need for Effective Payment Mechanisms: Other than therural-urban divide, another key aspect for the present scenario of India’shealthcare facilities is the easy out-of-pocket expenditure (roughly 70%). Thisimplies that the vast majority Indian patients pay for their healthcarefacilities with direct cash with no payment arrangements.

As stated by WorldBank and National Commission’s report on Macroeconomics, only 5% of the totalpopulation of India has health insurance. Such a low figure in healthcareinsurance has made the service available only to people with high income. Coming to the administrative side, the Indian government plays a veryimportant role in running several health insurance programmes for thepopulation with high-risk of health issues and also regulates private insurancemarkets. Presently there are few such programmes such as Community HealthInsurance programme for the population below poverty line (like Medicaid in theUS) and Life Insurance Company (LIC) policy for senior citizens (like Medicarein the US). All of these programs are controlled by General InsuranceCorporation which is a government controlled organisation. According to theseschemes, people have to pay upfront cash and get reimbursed by filing a claim. 3. Demand for Basic Primary Healthcare and Infrastructure: Oneof the main issues that India is facing is to fix the basic health concerns ofHIV, malaria, TB and diarrhoea.

Also most of the children are born underweightand around 7% of them die before their fifth birthday. Also a very smallportion of the population have access to quality sanitation. For healthcare, the Indian government spends only about 30% of the country’stotal healthcare budget. The need for skilled medical graduates keeps growing, especially in rural areas which fail to attract new graduates because offinancial reasons. A sizeable percentage of the graduates also go abroad topursue higher studies and employment. 4. Growing Pharmaceutical Sector: According to the Indian BrandEquity Foundation (IBEF), India is the third-largest exporter of pharmaceuticalproducts in terms of volume. Around 80% of the market is composed of genericlow-cost drugs which seem to be the major driver of this industry.

The increase in the ageing population, rising incomes of the middle class, and the development of primary care facilities are expected to shape thepharmaceutical industry in future. The government has already taken someliberal measures by allowing foreign direct investment in this area which hasbeen a key driving force behind the growth of Indian pharma. 5. Underdeveloped Medical Devices Sector: The medicaldevices sector is the smallest piece of India’s healthcare pie. However, it isone of the fastest-growing sectors in the country like the health insurancemarketplace.

Till date, the industry has faced a number of regulatorychallenges which has prevented its growth and development. Recently, the government has been positive on clearing regulatory hurdlesrelated to the import-export of medical devices, and has set a few standardsaround clinical trials. According to The Economic Times, the medicaldevices sector is seen as the most promising area for future development byforeign and regional investors; they are highly profitable and always in demandin other countries. There are multiple factors including lifestyles that influence the burden ofdisease. The burden of communicable diseases has been declining.

The focus ofthe Government is to provide accessible, affordable and accountable qualityhealthcare facilities to all sections of society especially the marginalizedsections in the country. While there are   multiple challenges, the availability of PrimaryHealth Centres, human resources, number of medical colleges and medical seats, have been improving. Public health and hospitals being a State subject, the primary responsibilityto address healthcare challenges is that of State Governments. However, underNational Health Mission (NHM), financial and technical support is provided toStates/UTs to strengthen their healthcare systems including support forstrengthening health infrastructure, deployment of medical personnel, ASHAs, creating awareness about health issues and lifestyles, and support movementtowards Universal Health Coverage. The Central Government has enacted the Clinical Establishment (Registration andRegulation) Act, 2010 and also notified Clinical Establishments Rules 2012 toprovide a legislative framework for the registration and regulation of clinicalestablishments in the country and also seeks to improve the quality healthservices by prescribing minimum standards of facilities and services which maybe provided.

The Government has also taken steps for strengthening and upgrading districthospitals and making available tertiary health care services in the publicsector through strengthening of hospitals, establishment of AIIMS institutionsin the States and up-gradation of existing Government medical colleges acrossthe country. With regard to increasing awareness about the health issues, the Ministry ofHealth and Family Welfare regularly releases print advertisement and TV andradio spots in National/regional media for generating awareness amongpopulation about various Health and Family Welfare issues and programmes ofMinistry of Health and Family Welfare. These include Mission Indradhanush, World Health Day, World No Tobacco Day, Yoga Day, Intensified Diarrhoea ControlFortnight, World Population Day, Breastfeeding, Tuberculosis, etc. The Government has formulated the National Health Policy 2017 which has laidemphasis on the role of the Government in regulation, governance, and qualityassurance, healthcare infrastructure and in leveraging information technology. The policy also envisages raising public health expenditure to 2. 5% of the GDPin a time bound manner.