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INDIA DIGITALISING ITS HEALTHCARE: BRINGING MUCH AWAITED HOPE

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Abstract : Revolutionizing healthcare mechanism to provide hassle free cost effective quality medical facility to the majority of population of world's largest country is practically a daunting challenge being currently faced by Indian medical establishment. Digitalising the available information of its all stakeholders by adopting advanced technology to amalgamate relevant data base in order to form a Health Bank, having complete Patient - Doctor information, that shall go long way in shifting paradigm from treating disease to preventing them in quick and efficient way, bringing new hope to the vast unorganized healthcare system of India.

INDRODUCTION

Mostly uneducated and poverty ridden heavily populated rural India, still under the influence of quacks and disbeliefs, strive hard to have their birth right of having basic healthcare facility. So acute need for revolutionizing its existing healthcare system through the process of digitalization, beneficial for both patients and the profession, remains a continuous endeavor for the Government of India. Practice of medicine among its largely scattered huge population is no longer an exception to this ongoing trend of data integration and technology transformation that result in to predictive analytics and improved diagnostic accuracy for disease outcome and optimal resource allocation, fulfilling the basic requirement for the ultimate survival of healthy Indian medical system

RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

Having adopted various advanced medical innovations like wearable health devices, health apps, customized wellness programmes, fitness trackers, telemedicine consultations, remote patient monitoring system, genomics and many more data driven models, mainly by urban Indian population, the increased internet accessibility and familiarity with social media, proving to be powerful reliable tool of health education, have started empowering Indian community with sense of more responsibility towards their health and wellness. This newly adopted 360-degree patient doctor information system that the vast healthcare ecosystem in India is accepting, requiring urgent proliferation, can prove the only way to deliver cost effective quality healthcare solutions to its entire population, since existing Indian medical infrastructure can hardly meet its growing medical demands.

The unexpected mass awareness resulting out of blessing in disguise, created due to wide spread on-line digital applications of medicine during COVID-19 pandemic, opened new vistas in the sector of virtual health by ensuring better delivery of sustainable healthcare services all across India, where there is only one doctor for a population of 1300 compared to 300 persons in developed countries. Typically this ratio in India widens due to its urban verses rural dichotomy, where there are less than thirty percent doctors available to its nearly one hundred billion rural population. Additionally distribution of health workforce across various states of India

also varies from state to state and the inheriting hesitation of medics and paramedics to serve in rural areas due to lack of infrastructure and support system coupled with inadequate remuneration, further complicate the uniform distribution of advanced healthcare facility in the country. So this shift from the traditional medical paradigm to modern technology by adopting the advanced techniques of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) is not only the need of the hour but its advantages in turn also revolutionize the process of new therapies, optimize drug design and predicts drug efficacy, the growing areas of medical field which are still premature in India.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

With the near completion of digitalization of data for world's largest health insurance scheme, Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, Government of India has started digitalizing medical records of its more than one billion people. Like developed countries, bar coded Quick Response (QR) scan enabled allotment of identity number through Photo Health Identity Card issued by National Health Authority of India to its nearly half a billion citizens, is yet another step towards the digitalization of individual health data. While these records accessed only after obtaining explicit consent, ensuring security and privacy protection of data, to foster collaboration between data scientists, healthcare professionals and policymakers, will ultimately strengthen the delivery of corrupt free efficient medical facilities cutting across its urban and rural boundaries. Likewise huge network of more than 80,000 hospitals and about 40,000 primary healthcare centers in the country are already integrating the networking of data of all types of registered medical establishments, primary or tertiary, rural or urban including investigatory laboratories to strengthen this process of digitalization.

Similarly the country's National Medical Commission has started reconciling and digitalizing the complete information of entire medical fraternity by providing unique ID number to them so as to formulate their National Medical Register that shall be accessible to the public domain. With this information, current generation patients would like to know and select practitioners of their choice besides this process will help in the weeding out the unauthorized quacks and unlawful establishments those are still predominantly existing particularly in rural India.

Additionally, to streamline the delivery of cashless facility for expenses incurred on medical treatment at network preferred hospitals empanelled under different healthcare missions and insurance covers, National Health Authority of India is contemplating to constitute digital health claims settlement platform operational through National Health Claim Exchange, that will finally prove a game-changer in offering hassle free medical services in India.

CONCLUSION

Proper coordination of all these stakeholders is the need of the hour and that is possible through the process of digitalization of their entire activities under single window system monitored by robust a Health Regulatory mechanism, is precisely the only way to provide tech-enabled risk free easily accessible and affordable advanced healthcare facilities to much deserved large population of India. To make it practically successful, Medical Regulatory authorities of the country basically need to develop an exclusive Medical Bank, containing detailed information on patient - doctor history besides competency on their services offered and treatment institutions, which can prove to be unique of its kind in the medical world, having full of advantages through in AI and ML techniques, ensuring ultimate solution to this serious issue in India.

For bringing clarity and to bring immediate success to achieve this objective, Government of India is also putting in place all types of modern fraud control measures, robust audit system and other vigilance control and balances to reduce errors and check misuse of this type of system for unlawful economic gains and encouraging other unethical offences. Problem of moral hazards, unfair technical practices, unwanted political interferences and unexpected financial attractions in the working environment overweighed with corruption and capitalism, may create hiccups in conceptualizing this virtual Medical Bank in India, but at the same time strong will of

the public and the high morale of medical fraternity will not deter to make it a grand success in immediate future, that is the high need of the hour for Indian healthcare system.

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