GOVERNMENT APPROVES ADDITION OF FIVE THOUSAND MORE POST GRADUATE MEDICAL SEATS

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the Health Ministry’s proposal to add more post graduate seats in 148 state government medical colleges. This will be done by revising the student teacher ratio from current 1:1 to 2:1 from the 2010-2011 academic sessions. This will help to create additional seats in different PG courses. For super specialty courses, the ratio will become 2:1 for both professor and associate professor and this will increase availability of nearly 700 seats. The same rule will apply for private medical colleges from 2011-2012.

MoU SIGNED FOR DEVELOPING HEALTH CARE FACILITIES ALONG RAILWAY NETWORK

Union Health and Family Welfare Secretary K. Sujatha Rao and Chairman of the railway board S.S.Khurana signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for developing healthcare infrastructure along the railway network across the country on 5th February, 2010. The ministries will collaborate to develop health care facilities for both allopathic and Indian systems of medicine which could be used as trauma centres for emergencies, accidents and natural disasters. The ministries will set up a working group for a time bound early identification of projects on a priority basis. In the proposed centres, the primary healthcare facilities can be run by State Government.

5000 CRORE INCENTIVES GRANT TO STATES FOR BETTER PERFORMANCE IN CHILD HEALTH

The 13th Finance Commission has set aside Rs 5000 crore as incentives grant to be rewarded to states based on their performance in Child Health. The grant would be given over a 3 year period of 2012-2015 with Rs 1500 crore given in first two years and Rs 2000 crore given in the last year. This measure is taken to encourage states to work better in this regard and reach the NRHM mission to reduce IMR of India from 53 per 1000 in 2008 to 30 per 1000 in 2012.
SOON CANCER DRUGS TO COST NEARLY HALF THE PRICE FROM GOVERNMENT OUTLETS

The government is planning to retail cancer drugs through its 'Jan Aushadhi' stores which offer essential unbranded drugs at discounted rates. To start with, first line cancer medicines may be sold from major pharma companies & offered at nearly half the price set at 'Jan Aushadhi' stores to be set up at state hospitals where cancer is diagnosed & treated. The states will have an option to decide whether they want to offer these medicines only to BPL families or to the entire population. At present 'Jan Aushadhi' stores stock 282 unbranded medicines which are all sourced from pharma PSU's & offered at affordable prices.

HEALTH MINISTRY DECIDES TO LET MARRIED WOMEN JOIN NURSING COURSES

The nurse doctor ratio in India is 1.5:1 compared to 3:1 in developed countries. With the country facing this acute shortage of trained nurses, the health ministry has now decided to let married women to get admission to nursing courses. The ministry has now also increased the retirement age of the faculty in nursing college to 70 years. It was also decided to relax the qualification and experience of nursing teachers up to 2012. The eligibility criteria to admission for diploma and degree have been relaxed by 5%. Teacher student ratio for M.Sc. programme has been relaxed from 1:5 to 1:10.

ACCORDING TO WHO CANCER DEATHS TO GO UP BY 45% BY 2030

According to WHO (World Health Organization) the number of global cancer deaths is projected to increase by 45% from 2007 to 2030 (from 7.9 million to 11.5 million). Cancer has become the leading cause of death worldwide and the number of cases is influenced in part by an increasing and aging global population. According to experts 40% of all cancer deaths can be prevented by curbing tobacco sales, having an active lifestyle, avoiding alcohol and controlling exposure to occupational or environment carcinogens.

SOUTH ASIA'S FIRST MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY PARK TO MAKE QUALITY HEALTHCARE AFFORDABLE IN INDIA

Trivitron Healthcare Pvt. Ltd. has set up a technology park to manufacture & bring cutting edge technology of international quality at affordable costs to medical professionals across the country at Irungattukottai, near Chennai. This will be another feather in the cap of Tamil Nadu's healthcare system, which is already the leading state in the country for healthcare delivery & the choicest destination for medical tourism.
US STUDY LED BY INDIAN ORIGIN SCIENTISTS FINDS BITTER GOURD PREVENTS CANCER SPREAD

According to research published in the latest issue of the medical journal “Cancer Research”, Scientists from Saint Louis University have for the first time found that an extract from bitter melon or bitter gourd not only killed human breast cancer cells but also prevented them from multiplying. The next step is to test the extract in an animal model where positive results could lead to human trials. This finding will be especially useful to Indian women as it is commonly available and affordable dietary product to help control the surge of breast cancer cases in the country.

OXFORD TEAM USES PATENTED TECHNOLOGY TO MAKE VACCINES REMAIN EFFECTIVE AT ROOM TEMPERATURE

A team of Oxford University scientists has demonstrated it was possible to store two different virus-based vaccines on sugar stabilized membranes for 48 months at 45 degree Celsius without degradation. The study showed that vaccines they were developing could be stabilized for months using Nova Biopharma technologies’ patented technology called the hypodermic rehydration injection system (Hyd RIS). This could come as a boon for India where reports of vaccines getting spoiled due to bad cold storage facilities are common.

FOURTEEN PEOPLE DIE EVERY HOUR IN ROAD ACCIDENTS

According to a report by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the number of death due to road accidents in India in the year 2008 has crossed 1.18 lakh accounting for 14 deaths per hour. The number of persons injured in road accidents in 2008 is four times the total death toll. The other features of the report includes the facts that road accidents account for the maximum (37.1%) share of unnatural causes of accidental deaths in the county.

US STUDY FINDS CURE FOR OSTEOPOROSIS

According to a study featured in the journal ‘Nature Medicine’, a team from California University Medical Centre in New York tested a compound that blocks the production of the serotonin hormone in the gut of mice & rats with severe osteoporosis & found that they completely recovered their bone density. The compound tested by researchers in people was given once a day orally.

DO YOU KNOW?

1. MTQUA ranks Fortis, Bangaluru as number one for medical tourists.
2. Emergency care in India might be mandatory now.
3. World Cancer day was observed on 4th February - Theme “Cancer can be prevented too”.
4. Coming soon: Bioscience machines to curb tobacco addictions in two years.
6. Soon 30 hours of training per year be made mandatory for nurses.
7. Delhi maintains best TB detection record since 2005
8. NUHM launch deferred to 2012.
9. New software in use at AIIMS trauma centre to monitor ICU patient’s vital signs online.
10. NGO’s to be involved in 2011 census.

RECENT RESEARCHES
UNION BUDGET 2010-11 - (HIGHLIGHTS FOR HEALTH SECTOR)

- Allocation to the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare increased from Rs. 19,534 crore to Rs. 22,300 crore for 2010-11, i.e. an increase by almost 14%.
- Allocation for the NRHM increased from Rs. 14,000 crore to Rs. 15,514 crore, i.e. an increase by almost 11%.
- An annual health survey to prepare the health profile of all districts & to benefit NRHM, to be conducted in 2010-11.
- Increased allocation for human resources in health from Rs. 62 crore in 2009-10 to Rs. 323 crore in 2010-11, to cater the shortage of professionals.
- Allocation to National AIDS Control Program increased to 1291.25 crore from 888.15 crore.
- Increase of allocation from Rs. 77 crore to Rs. 155 crore for Cancer research.
- Allocation for Mental Health Program almost doubled to over Rs. 103 crore.
- Rs 90 crore allocated for the National Program for Prevention of Diabetes, CVDs & Stroke (almost tripled).
- Allocation of Rs 13 crore to AIIMS.
- Prices of medicines to go up 1.2% on account of higher raw material costs due to 2% excise duty rollback.
- Uniform, concessional basic duty of 5%, counter veiling duties of 4% with full exemption from special additional duty prescribed on all medical equipments.
- Concession available to Government hospitals set up under a statute, also to be retained.
- Specified inputs for manufacture of orthopaedic implants exempted from import duty.
- Allocation of Rs. 7,806.71 crore for ICDS (Integrated Child Development Scheme), which is being expanded for the effective implementation of the Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Adolescent Girls.
- Plan outlay for Women & Child Development stepped up by almost 50%.

Sources:
(http://indiabudget.nic.in, The Times of India, EconomicTimes.indiatimes.com, The Hindu)

NOTE: The newsletter is open for inclusion of any information or advertisement; however selection of information will be governed by the SYNAPSE Team, IIHMR, New Delhi

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