

**PERCEPTION
OF PEOPLE
REGARDING SERVICES
PROVIDED BY
PRIVATE
HOSPITALS
IN SELECTED AREAS
OF**

MAHARASHTRA

This report
unearths the peoples'
experiences they face
while accessing
private healthcare
services; as well as their
demands for
regulation of
healthcare sector
including rate
standardization.

M A H A R

A: Introduction:

In India per capita expenses on healthcare are 4 percent of GDP (1) Approximately 90% of families in India do not have any kind of health insurance, thus the out of pocket (OOP) expenditures on health services is very high. Hence nearly 85% of total healthcare expenditure turns out to be 'OOP' pocket. (2) This is especially hard on the poor, who are pushed into significant debt. As per WHO report, nearly 32 million persons in India are pushed below poverty line every year due to OOP incurred in private hospitals.(3)

There are growing number of cases reported in media regarding the unrest in the patients including attacks on doctors and private hospitals. There is a report of hospital keeping bouncers on payroll to deal with potential unrest. "Thousands of attacks occur in Indian Hospitals every year" said Dr. Narendra Sainy, a spokesperson for Indian Medical Association in the year 2012.(4) Except for some level of evidence in the form of news and specific cases published in media, there is a gap in documentation about people's perception regarding private health care services.

Maharashtra Government had appointed a committee to draft a bill for Maharashtra clinical establishment act in the year 2014. The committee handed over the draft to the Ministry of Health, Maharashtra state. Under the pressure from Indian Medical Association members in the committee, the committee has omitted one important provision of rate regulation existent in central Clinical Establishments Act 2010. In this context, the present study also attempted to document peoples' perceptions for bringing in regulation of private healthcare sector with the inclusion of rate control.

(1) <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.XPD.TOTL.ZS/countries>.

(2) <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.XPD.OOPC.ZS>

(3) <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/201754/content/219337/F>

(4) <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/hospitals-in-india-hire-bouncers-to-deter-attacks/1/216702.html>

A S H T R A

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B: Objectives:

- To understand peoples' perceptions regarding various aspects of doctor-patient relationship in private health sector.
- To document peoples' expectations about the need for regulation of private healthcare sector with rate regulation.

C: Methodology:

This study is quantitative in nature, using with convenience sampling.

Criteria for selection of participants :

Adult person willing to participate in the study.

Criteria for selection of districts and blocks :

The districts and blocks were selected for conducting survey because network partner organizations conducted survey on their own in some areas and supported appointed field facilitators in Pune and Nagpur.

Name of the district/City	Sample Size
• Chandrapur	59
• Other including – Amarawati, Kurkheda, Nagar, Nanded, Yawatmal, rural Pune	52
• Nagpur City	205
• Pune City	335
• Total sample Size	651

Data collection :

Data has been collected through interacting with people in various public places. People were approached conveniently at laughter clubs, senior citizens clubs, temples, people coming out from malls; cinema halls etc and also by door to door visit in some societies.

The consent was read out, name and mobile number taken.

Answers given by the participants were noted down by the investigators/ Answers were filled by the respondents.

Survey questionnaire :

A structured questionnaire was prepared to gather information regarding people's perceptions regarding billing mechanism, choice given to take second opinion, information provided by the hospital, and overall level of satisfaction regarding the services from private hospitals.

Limitation of this study: Data is collected through convenience sampling.

Strengths of the study: It gauges perceptions – the undercurrent of opinions regarding the private hospitals. It will help policy makers to take note of various aspects of discontent. Two of the questions in the questionnaire are about expectations of people regarding making it compulsory for doctors to write generic medicines and for regulation of the private healthcare sector with inclusion of rates. The response would be helpful for advocacy for Maharashtra Clinical Establishments Act with rate regulation.

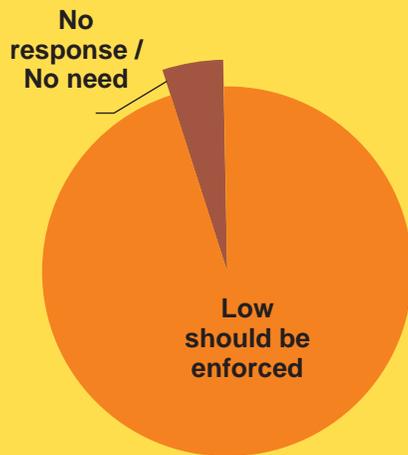
D : Findings

For each question, the number of respondents is different as the respondents have answered only those questions for which they wanted to express their opinion.

1. Sufficiency of information provided by the health staff: Analysis of the data shows that as high as 83% (n=540) respondents perceived that the information given to them was insufficient and only 17% (n=108) have perceived the information to be sufficient.
2. Appropriateness of hospital bill as perceived by participants: It has been observed that 37% (n=242) of the respondents have considered the bill improper, 45% (n=296) have considered the bill inflated.

Regarding the influence of having insurance on their bill; 48% (n=258) perceived that their bills inflated because they have some insurance.

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3. Whether deposit was insisted for treatment of serious patients? 63% (n=433) reported that in case of treatment of serious patients, payment of deposit was insisted.

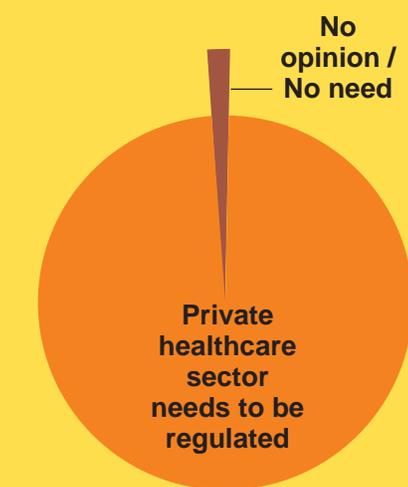
4. Whether adequate time was given to the patient/family member to decide about signing the consent form? 60.2% (n=392) respondents answered that they were not given adequate time.

5. Compelled to take services :

- 37% (n=241) of respondents perceived to be forced to take medicine from hospital or, a particular prescribed shop.
- 30% (n=196) perceive that they were not allowed to take second opinion if they desired so.

6. Perception about need to enforce a law on generic medicine

95% (n=621) perceive that a law shall be passed to enforce the medical practitioners to prescribe generic medicine along with the brand name to reduce the cost of medicines significantly.



7. Opinion about regulation of private health care sector :

General opinion regarding the regulation of quality and rates of private healthcare depicts people's level of dissatisfaction with the private healthcare services.

As high as 98% (n=636) people expressed that private healthcare sector needs to be regulated.

Index of satisfaction (rating of private health care services)

An index on people's level of satisfaction (table 1) towards private health care services has been created. Index scale takes into account: how was scoring done?

- Enough information about the ailment and the proposed treatment has been provided or not.
- Questions of the patients/relatives related to ailment/procedure/operation /medicine etc. were answered properly or, answered with reluctance/irritation,
- Precise information about the expected bill at the time of admission and also later in an ongoing manner has been given or not
- Improper hospital bill 5.inflated hospital bill (because patient has insurance),
- inflated hospital bill,

- Treatment of serious patient started without insistence of deposit or not,
- Adequate time given to the patient/family member to decide about signing the consent form or not.
- Whether forced to take medicine from the prescribed place
- Allowed/not allowed to take second opinion, if patient/family member desired so.

Data have been analyzed by rating

1.  Good (9,10)
2.  Satisfactory (6,7,8)
3.  Dissatisfactory (3,4,5)
4.  Quite satisfactory (1,2)

E: Discussion:

Present study illustrates a huge level of perceptive discontent among general people towards private health care. The index of satisfaction clearly shows a strong undercurrent of dissatisfaction regarding private healthcare sector.

- 68% (n =642) participants are dissatisfied with the nature of healthcare received from private healthcare providers.

Findings illustrate that, patients/people perceive that their right to information, right to informed consent, right to second opinion, are violated quite frequently in private hospitals. They expect some form of regulation of private healthcare sector with inclusion of rate.

- 44% (n=284) were not given any intimation about bill amount;
- 45% (n=296) were of opinion that bills were inflated. 19.4% (n=124) opined that the bills were inflated because the patient had some form of healthcare insurance.
- 98% of our study respondents demand that private healthcare sector should be regulated
- 95% (n = 621) demand that a law shall be passed on prescribing

Rating of private healthcare services (On a ten point scale based on performance indicators)	Total number of responses (n=642)	Percentage (%)
• Good(9,10)	33	5%
• Satisfactory(6,7,8)	173	27%
• Dissatisfactory(3,4,5)	275	43%
• Quite dissatisfactory(0,1,2)	161	25%

Conclusion

This study brings in to public discourse that a large percentage of people—

- Are dissatisfied about the private healthcare sector in India.
- Are not allowed to take second opinion when they ask for.
- Are compelled to purchase medicines from a particular medical shop.
- Feel that the hospital bills are inflated when they are insured.
- Opine that the information received from doctors/ hospitals is insufficient.
- Demand that private healthcare sector needs to be regulated

Recommendation

The study underscores urgent need for bringing in an act for effective regulation of private healthcare sector in India with inclusion of rate regulation.