



February 2023

Healthcare Sector – Highlights from the Budget, 2023-2024

The Minister of Finance, Government of India, unveiled the Union Budget for the period April 1, 2023-March 31, 2024 (the “**Budget**”), earlier today. The Budget largely appears to focus on improvement of the public healthcare system in India, through Government run initiatives, as well as close co-operation with the private sector. Simultaneously, the Budget envisages preparation towards adoption of futuristic technologies in medicine, through various up-skilling services and training services. Towards this goal for the healthcare sector, as set out in the Budget, a sum of INR 88,956,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees eighty eight thousand nine hundred fifty six crore) has been allocated to health expenditure.

In this brief note, we set out the actions proposed to be taken in the healthcare sector, by the Government of India, in the coming fiscal period.

Healthcare Sector – Highlights from the Budget, 2023-2024

1. Establishment of Nursing Colleges

Establishment of 157 (one hundred fifty seven) new nursing colleges in co-location with the existing 157 (one hundred fifty seven) medical colleges established since 2014.

2. Elimination of Sickle Cell Anaemia

According to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, Sickle Cell Anaemia is a genetic condition affecting haemoglobin in red blood cells and causing morbidity and mortality. It is widespread amongst the tribal population in India, with approximately 1 (one) in 86 (eighty six) births having the condition.

The Budget proposes the setting up of a Mission to eliminate Sickle Cell Anaemia by 2047. It will entail awareness creation, universal screening of 7,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees seven crore) people in the age group of 0 (zero) – 40 (forty) years in affected tribal areas, and counselling through collaborative efforts of central ministries and state governments.

3. Medical Research and Pharma Innovation

Facilities in select Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Labs will be made available for research by public and private medical college faculty and private sector research and development (R&D) teams for encouraging collaborative research and innovation.

A new programme to promote research and innovation in pharmaceuticals will be taken up through centers of excellence. The pharma industry would be encouraged to invest in research and development in specific priority areas.

Healthcare Practice

JSA provides a full range of transactional and advisory services in the healthcare sector. We represent clients in the entire spectrum of the health care system, including, hospital networks and individual hospitals, managed care organisations, health insurers, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, medical device manufacturers; and major financial investors in the sector. These include domestic as well multinational clients. Our clients in the sector range from start-ups to industry leaders. We also represent the leading trade associations representing these industries, namely, Centre for Scientific & Industrial Research, Centre for DNA finger printing & Diagnostics, Institute of Microbial Technology, All India Institute of Medical Science-Department of Biotechnology, National Institute of Health & Family Welfare, etc.

JSA also has substantial experience in matters relating to regulation of foods, drugs, medical devices, cosmetics, product packaging, and dangerous chemicals. Our attorneys advise manufacturers on Indian labelling questions, national rules for testing and review of new products, reporting of safety information, and proceedings relating to product withdrawals. We regularly advise clients on regulatory standards governing advertising, the distinction between advertising and labelling and the differing regulatory standards that apply to each, and the roles of the states and self-regulatory mechanisms. JSA has been actively involved in advising clients with respect to regulation of nutrition and health claims in food advertising.

We also have extensive experience in litigating cases in courts and administrative agencies in the healthcare sector.

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