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Cover Story

MEDICINE

THE CUTTING EDGE

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- PLASTIC SURGERY
- PSYCHIATRY
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- NUCLEAR MEDICINE



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STATE OF THE ART HOSPITALS, GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH AND MAJOR GOVERNMENT REFORMS ARE ALL CHANGING THE FACE OF HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY IN INDIA

TOP 10 COLLEGES 2009
THE INDIA TODAY-NIELSEN SURVEY

- 1 **AIIMS, Delhi**
www.aiims.edu
- 2 **Christian Medical College, Vellore**
www.cmch-vellore.edu
- 3 **Armed Forces Medical College, Pune**
www.afmc.nic.in
- 4 **JIPMER, Puducherry**
www.jipmer.edu
- 5 **Maulana Azad Medical College, Delhi**
www.mamc.ac.in
- 6 **Madras Medical College, Chennai**
www.mmc.tn.gov.in
- 7 **Grant Medical College, Mumbai**
www.grantmedicalcollege-jjhospital.org
- 8 **Seth GS Medical College, Mumbai**
www.kem.edu
- 9 **Kasturba Medical College, Manipal**
www.manipal.edu
- 10 **Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi**
www.du.ac.in

By Diksha Madhok

Last year, as the investment bankers got sacked and the outsourcing industry floundered, there was one field which flourished and did some groundbreaking research—the Indian healthcare industry. Currently estimated to be a USD 35 billion industry, it is expected to reach USD 150 billion by 2017. Concurrently, investment in research and development in medicine is expected to grow if India has to keep up with the international competition. Cutting edge research is already taking place in areas such as stem cells, molecular diagnostics, clinical proteomics and genomics. So whether you are interested in practice or R&D, the career graph of medical aspirants certainly looks upbeat.

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TOP COLLEGES 2009 THE INDIA TODAY-NIELSEN SURVEY

- 11 University College of Medical Sciences and GTB Hospital, Delhi,** www.ucms.ac.in
- 12 St. John's Medical College,** Bangalore, www.stjohns.in
- 13 B.J. Medical College,** Ahmedabad, gujhealth.gov.in/medi_edu/ins_bj_ahm.htm
- 14 Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj Medical University,** Lucknow, www.kgmciindia.edu
- 15 Institute of Medical Sciences,** Varanasi, www.bhu.ac.in/ims
- 16 Bangalore Medical College (BMC),** Bangalore, Ph: 080-26704342
- 17 Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute,** Chennai, www.srmc.edu
- 18 Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences and Research Centre,** Kochi, www.aimshospital.org
- 19 Christian Medical College (CMC),** Ludhiana, www.cmcludhiana.org
- 20 Medical College and Hospital,** Kolkata, www.medicalcollegelolkata.org
- 21 Stanley Medical College (SMC),** Chennai, www.stanmed.net
- 22 Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education and Research,** Kolkata, www.ipgmer.gov.in
- 23 M.S. Ramaiah Medical College,** Bangalore, www.msrmc.ac.in
- 24 Osmania Medical College,** Hyderabad, www.osmania.ac.in
- 25 T.N. Medical College,** Mumbai, www.nair.edu

The impetus behind this surge is the growing economy and an increasingly aware urban population. "There are four factors changing the face of medicine — corporatisation, availability of high-end technology, rise of medical insurance and rigorous government initiatives in rural India," says Dr Dilpreet Brar, regional director, Max Healthcare. The low cost of medical treatments and the mushrooming of high-end hospitals all across the country have ensured that medical tourism grows at an unprecedented rate. It is, in fact, the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry.

administration and medical Superintendent, AIIMS.

Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore, too believes in providing affordable and quality healthcare to every individual in the country. Interdisciplinary education, state of the art labs and top notch faculty are the distinguishing features of these colleges. At Kasturba Medical College, Manipal, R&D is an important component. "We motivate students and faculty into research by financing their papers or providing support for attending international or domestic conferences," explains, Dr Sripathi Rao,

Medical Tourism is the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry. It will attract 1.1 million patients by 2012.

India's share in the medical tourism pie is expected to increase steadily in the next few years, and by 2012 nearly 1.1 million foreigners will flock to India for medical treatments.

To keep abreast with the bullish industry, the best medical colleges continue to upgrade their teaching methodology. All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), indisputably our best medical college and research institute, zealously adheres to its motto of providing not just sound training but also ingraining ethical principles in their students. "With rising expectations from the medical community, colleges need to focus on quality teachers and research. Our department completely revised its teaching model in the last two years," declares Dr Shakti Gupta, head, department of hospital

Dean, Kasturba Medical College.

The good news does not end here. If becoming a scientist or a doctor is not your cup of tea, there are a plethora of options that you can choose from. Hospital administration or management is one such field. "One can no longer run hospitals without professional help. Operational management or brand marketing are becoming key components in any healthcare centre," says Uday Salunkhe, Group Director, Welingkar Institute of Management. AIIMS is the oldest institution providing training to the country's health managers. The Department of Hospital Administration introduced the course in 1962. The eligibility requirement at AIIMS is an MBBS degree but several institutes also consider other science graduates. As of now, roughly 118 institutes dealing with healthcare management exist in India and produce close to 50,000 professionals. This number is expected to climb up to nearly one lakh graduates in the next five years to keep up with the rising demand.

As the healthcare industry becomes increasingly technology-driven, clinical engineers are



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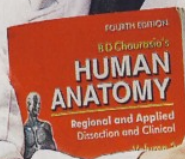
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destined to be much sought-after in the coming years. Their primary responsibility is to ensure smooth running of all clinical equipments in a healthcare centre. Three top institutes of the country — Sri Chitra Triunial Institute of Medical Science and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram, Indian Institute of Management, Chennai and CMC Vellore, have come together to offer an M.Tech in this field.

Apart from medical students, life sciences graduates too have a reason to cheer. The pharma industry has been on an upswing and has led to attractive career prospects in R&D. Some of the job opportunities would be in the domain of clinical research operations, medical writing, data management and pharmacovigilance.

Newer specialisations are emerging as India attempts to level with international healthcare standards. Emergency services have long been a recognised specialisation in countries such as US and UK. Recently, the Medical Council of India (MCI) gave it a thumbs up and colleges across India have been notified to offer it as a post graduate discipline. "Right now emergency rooms are being manned by physicians. Introducing a specialisation will make a significant improvement in the services," opines Dr Rao.

Geriatric medicine or the care of the elderly is another area to watch out for in the future. Already a specialisation in developed countries, it would require more attention in medical schools in India as the life



India is facing a shortage of **6 lakh** doctors, **10 lakh** nurses and **2 lakh** dental surgeons.

For every **10,000** Indians there is one doctor. In contrast, USA has **548**. The HR demand is severe.

299 medical colleges are there in the country. **One** out of two graduates gets to do a PG.

Rs 30,000 p.m. is the average starting salary for a junior resident in a private hospital.

The cost of producing one MBBS graduate at AIIMS is **Rs 1.72 crore**. **54%** of them go abroad.

Indians with foreign MBBS degree must clear **MCI's** test in order to practice here.

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expectancy in India is on a rise.

But despite the optimism surrounding healthcare, rural areas seem appallingly marginalised. More children die of malnutrition in India than in Sub-Saharan Africa. The World Health Organisation estimates that Indians — who make up 17 percent of the world's population — suffer 28 percent of the world's total years lost to respiratory infections, 25 percent of the years lost to tuberculosis, 24 percent of the years lost to diarrheal diseases, 21 percent of the years lost to measles, and 45 percent of the years lost to leprosy. In addition, 2.5 million people in India are living with HIV/AIDS. According to the Economic

Survey 2008-09, there is a shortage of 20,855 sub-centres, 4,833 primary health centres and 2,525 community health centres as per 2001 population norm. India spends a paltry one percent of its GDP on public health, placing it below most low income countries. In 2005, the National Rural Health Mission was launched to provide accessible, affordable and accountable quality health services to the poorest households in the remotest of regions. In order to attract more doctors to the peripheral areas, incentives in terms of salaries and reservation in post graduate seats are on offer.

The medical education in the country needs its share of upgrada-

New frontiers: The best medical technology is now available in India

tion. Currently, there are 299 medical colleges, but only a handful produce quality doctors. The lack of faculty is one of the major problems, as a majority of qualified teachers prefer to join the private hospitals or the pharma industry due to better pay. The cutthroat competition for the unfairly limited post graduate seats makes the matter worse. According to the official estimates only one out of two MBBS graduates gets to do a specialisation, but experts fear that actual ratio might be even more skewed. Research in most areas is slow and not funded adequately and doctors interested in super specialisations have to look westward.

Liberalisation of the education sector might ease the burden and allow more state of the art institutions to open up. With the government and the private sector rising to the challenge, healthcare reforms are not far behind, making it a promising career choice for youngsters.



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DR SHAKTI GUPTA, HEAD, DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION, AIIMS