

5. Medical Education in India

The Union Cabinet has approved the addition of 10,023 medical seats with an investment of Rs. 15,034 crore, as part of the goal to create 75,000 medical seats within the next five years.

Cabinet Approval and Funding

The Union Cabinet has approved the addition of 5,000 postgraduate seats and 5,023 undergraduate (MBBS) seats in government medical colleges and hospitals by 2028–29. This ambitious expansion is part of India's effort to strengthen the medical workforce and improve healthcare access nationwide.

Funding Model

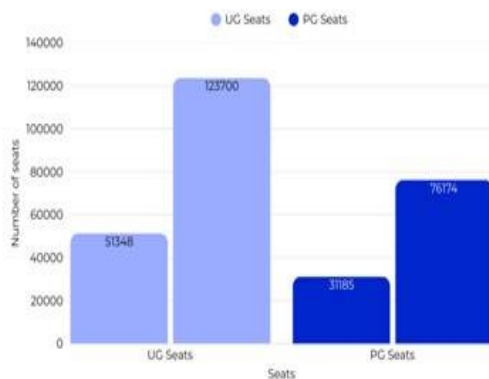
Union Government – Contributes 68.5% of the total project cost, equivalent to ₹10,303.20 crore.

States – Contribute the remaining ₹4,731.30 crore.

This shared investment ensures both central oversight and state-level participation in implementing the expansion.

Growth of Medical Education (2013-14 to 2025-26)

Medical colleges expanded from 387 to 808 (109% increase)
Undergraduate seats grew by 141% to 1,23,700
Postgraduate seats showed the highest growth at 144%



India's Growing Medical Education Infrastructure

Medical Colleges – Increased from 387 in 2013–14 to 808 in 2025–26, reflecting more than double the number of institutions in just over a decade.

Seats Growth

Undergraduate (MBBS) Seats – Increased by 141%, now totaling 1,23,700 seats.

Postgraduate Seats – Increased by 144%, improving specialization opportunities.

AIIMS Expansion – 22 new AIIMS approved under the Pradhan Mantri

Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY), ensuring affordable tertiary healthcare is accessible across the country.

Faculty Regulations – The National Medical Commission (NMC) notified the Medical Institution (Qualifications of Faculty) Regulations, 2025, allowing for recruitment of more qualified faculty to meet growing demand.

Impacts of Expanding Medical Education

Increased Access for Students – More aspiring doctors can pursue medical education domestically, reducing dependency on foreign medical schools.

Quality Enhancement – Scaling up institutions and faculties aligns India's medical education with global standards.

Healthcare Accessibility – More doctors and specialists will improve medical services in underserved rural and remote areas, helping achieve equitable healthcare.

Economic Benefits – Boosts foreign exchange earnings through medical tourism. Creates direct jobs for doctors, faculty, and nurses. Generates indirect employment in administrative support, research, and ancillary services.

Global Leadership – Expanding the medical workforce positions India as a major hub for affordable and quality healthcare, attracting international collaborations and investments.

Challenges in Expansion

Rural Doctor Shortages – Despite increasing seats, rural India still faces severe shortages of medical professionals, contributing to healthcare disparities.

Limited Research Funding – Inadequate investment in medical research hinders innovation and limits India's contribution to global medical science.

Brain Drain – Many highly skilled doctors migrate abroad seeking better pay, research opportunities, and work environments, which expansion alone may not counter.

Retention Issues – Adding seats does not automatically guarantee retention unless career incentives and growth opportunities improve, especially in rural or low-resource settings.

Way Forward

Faculty Expansion – Recruit experienced specialists, retired faculty, and visiting professors. Implement continuous professional development programs to enhance teaching and clinical skills.

Rural Incentives – Offer career growth opportunities, financial incentives, and infrastructure support to encourage doctors to serve in rural areas.

Technological Integration – Leverage digital learning, telemedicine, AI-based training, and simulation tools for education and clinical practice. Facilitate remote learning and skill development across the country.

Resource Modernization – Upgrade teaching hospitals, laboratories, and simulation centres. Create advanced research facilities for specialized studies and innovation.

Research & Collaboration – Partner with global institutions for research exchanges, scholarships, and joint studies. Encourage domestic advanced research in medical science to reduce dependency on foreign education.

Sustainable Healthcare Workforce – Develop strategies to retain talent domestically, particularly in underserved regions, while promoting inclusive access to quality healthcare.

Conclusion

India's expansion of medical education represents a significant leap towards universal healthcare, aiming to –

1. Strengthen the medical workforce.
2. Raise education standards.
3. Provide quality healthcare nationwide.

The initiative will enhance India's global competitiveness in healthcare and medical education, improve rural health outcomes, and create a self-reliant and resilient healthcare system, marking a transformational step in achieving long-term public health and economic objectives.

Source – <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2172069#-~-text=%E2%80%9CApapproval%20of%20Phase%2DIII%20of,has%20availability%20of%20skilled%20doctors.%E2%80%9D>