

## Hospital Roundup: Professor Anupam Sibal, Apollo Hospitals Group, India

*How Asia's largest healthcare chain is improving patient safety.*



Apollo Hospitals Group is Asia's largest integrated healthcare corporation, with 9,000 beds across 54 hospitals in three countries.

GovInsider interviewed Professor Anupam Sibal, Group Medical Director, Apollo Hospitals Group, to find out about his key priorities for 2016.

### **What are your biggest achievements in hospital management and healthcare delivery in 2015?**

Quality and patient safety have become an increasingly predominant part of our strategy towards hospital management and healthcare delivery. With the internet, more patients are becoming aware of quality in healthcare. This has caused hospitals throughout the world to consider it as an essential component of the work ethos and in running hospitals on a day to day basis.

In this journey to provide healthcare of the highest quality and safety, this year Apollo completed ten years of JCI accreditation in India. Apollo Hospitals, Delhi had become

the first hospital in the country to be accredited by JCI in 2005. We have always been the leaders in introducing newer trends in quality and patient safety and this year was no different with Apollo Hospitals revising and updating Clinical Dashboards to compare our outcomes with best in class international benchmarks.

We have recently established a team to look at cutting edge innovation in the healthcare industry to keep Apollo at the forefront of quality care delivery. For better data management, we have shifted all the vital processes to a robust CRM software. We have redesigned the digital patient interface for better patient experience.

Only recently we organised the 5th International Patient Safety Congress in Bengaluru, Karnataka in tandem with the 6th Conference on Transforming Healthcare Using Information Technology. The conference was attended by over 1800 healthcare professionals.

By leveraging the collective experience and skills of our 6,200 plus doctor fraternity, investing in the latest technology, harnessing advancements in IT, embracing on-going learning and research, and benchmarking with the best in the world, we have successfully brought high standards of quality healthcare to the people.

### **What are your key priorities for next year?**

Our focus shall be on four key areas in healthcare. They are:

- Quality: Improving the quality and safety of the care
- Clinical outcomes: To benchmark with the best in class international standards
- Service excellence: To deliver an excellent experience to patients
- Innovation: To bring in new technologies and processes for better patient management



### **To what extent has your hospital adopted digital patient records?**

Apollo Hospitals have had a digitised patient management system since 2001. This included a summary patient clinical information system as well.

In 2013 we upgraded our systems to a better patient management system. Now we have all the patient demographic data, laboratory reports, prescriptions, billing and discharge summaries in digital format as well.

In 2015, we upgraded our Out Patient management system to a newer digital interface, which is very user friendly. We have also developed an intelligent drug database named HiPAR which helps doctors make better decisions while prescribing medicines to patients.

In the near future, we are looking to create and adopt a connected system which can not only give a consolidated view of all the clinical records across the Apollo Group, but also give our doctors and nurses a clinical decision support system for better and safer patient management.

### **What impact have digital patient records had on the hospital?**

Our world has been drastically transformed by digital technology. Devices like smart phones, tablets have transformed the way we communicate. Healthcare is an information-rich sector. A greater and more seamless flow of information within a digital health care infrastructure, created by Electronic Health Records, encompasses and leverages digital progress and has transformed the way healthcare is being accessed and delivered. With Electronic Health Records, information is available whenever and wherever it is needed and helps the physicians in making better and more informed decisions.

### **How have cloud technologies helped better manage the hospital?**

“Patient centricity” is the key trend in healthcare and it is leading to a steady growth in adoption of Electronic Medical Records, Electronic Health Records, Personal Health Records, and technologies related to integrated care, patient safety, point-of-care access to demographic and clinical information, along with clinical decision support.

Availability of data, irrespective of the location of the patient and the clinician, has become the key to both patient satisfaction and improved clinical outcomes. Cloud technologies significantly facilitate this trend and allow physicians to better diagnose and treat their patients.

Apollo Prism is one such initiative which helps patients to receive vital information like lab reports and other health reports directly from hospitals. Apollo Prism is a secure environment to store and access all health information on any mobile and web enabled device.

## **In which area do sensors and robotic technologies have the most potential?**

New medical technologies provide earlier diagnoses, personalised treatments and a range of other benefits for both patients and healthcare professionals. The scope of these emerging technologies is breath-taking.

High-tech sensors soon will monitor the at-home cardiac patient's heart every minute of every day. A new type of chip, embedded in a pill will be activated at the precise moment it reaches a patient's stomach, and will confirm for the medical record, whether he's taking his medications.

Medical robotics primarily includes the use of robots in rehabilitation therapy, disabled and elderly patient assistance, drug delivery, minimally invasive surgery, image-guided surgery, patient monitoring, and biological systems modelling for diagnoses, among other areas.

Apollo has one of the most advanced medical robots – Da Vinci – which has excellent advantages in Oncology, Neurology and Urology.

## **What technologies, tools or techniques are you most interested in for the next 6 months, and why?**

With around 80% of doctors living in urban cities, the accessibility of quality healthcare is a huge problem in rural India, where 70% of the population lives. With the telecommunication infrastructure getting strengthened in India, we cannot be in a better situation to leverage and solve the accessibility problems.

With a vision of touching billions of lives, using international standards of healthcare, Apollo Hospitals has launched the 'Ask Apollo' program in collaboration with the Government of India. 'Ask Apollo' is a patient-centric service, which combines the expertise of world-renowned Apollo doctors, with the convenience of consulting them at any time, from anywhere around the world. We are also in the process of establishing 60,000 Common Service Centres (CHCs) in internet enabled villages.