

‘India short of over 2 lakh doctors’

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: It seems efforts of Union Health Ministry to address medical practitioners’ crunch issue is going in vain as the latest report of Healthcare Foundation of India (HFI) has indicated a huge shortfall of doctors and nurses in the country.

According to Aarogya Bharat report of NatHealth, the research wing of HFI, there is a shortfall of nearly 2 lakh doctors and 4 lakh nurses in Indian healthcare system. Adding further, the report highlighted non-availability of doctors at primary health care centres (PHCs), which is very limited in numbers. “Eight per cent of PHCs do not have doctors or medical staff, while 39 per cent PHCs don’t have lab technicians and 18 per cent health care centres at primary level don’t even have a pharmacist,” the report said.



The report also pointed out that problem of under-utilisation as a major challenge apart from scarcity of medical personnel as about 50 per cent of the existing medical workforce don’t practice in the formal health system.

According to Planning Commission analysis, the ratio of doctor to nurse ideally should be at least 1:3 for the team to perform optimally. However in Indian system this ratio is currently 1:1.6 which is half of the official proportion. As per the findings of the report, the

healthcare services would create 15 lakh to 20 lakh new jobs for doctors, nurses and allied health professionals by 2025.

Talking to *Millennium Post*, Anjan Bose of NatHealth said, “There is a need to develop a plan to expand supply to address the skewed geographical distribution in medical education seats. We need regulations that enable private participation in medical education. The technology should also be harnessed to scale and accelerate the development of skills at lower cost”