

## Seeking Treatment: Choosing between going abroad or availing local healthcare facilities

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### What is the path forward for the healthcare industry?

Despite the progress made in the healthcare system of Bangladesh, the medical industry still faces significant challenges, particularly in terms of resources. One of the biggest issues still plaguing the field is a shortage of medical professionals, such as doctors and nurses. According to the World Health Organization, the current ratio of doctors to patients in Bangladesh is

only 5.26 to 10,000, which is one of the lowest among South Asian countries. This shortage of medical professionals leads to overworked doctors and nurses, especially in public hospitals, which can contribute to unprofessional behaviour and a lack of trust from patients.

"The medical industry in Bangladesh is suffering due to a lack of trained professionals. The demand for nurses, in particular, is three times greater than the current supply. While there are efforts to increase the number of

medical colleges and training facilities, it is still not enough to meet the need. Our hospitals keep adding new technology and offering top-notch services like maintaining strict infection protocols throughout surgeries.

Both the public and private sectors must take action to bring advanced treatments such as liver and heart transplants to Bangladesh. With the right planning and investment, Bangladeshi hospitals can provide the same level of care as foreign hospitals

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the Bangladesh Accreditation Board (BAB) can provide regulations and accreditations to different diagnostic centres and hospitals, and also monitor them on a regular basis."

A significant factor that contributes to patients seeking medical treatment abroad is a lack of knowledge about the country's improving healthcare facilities. Many patients are not aware of the advancements and improvements made in the healthcare system in Bangladesh and the



in the near future," said Dr Arif Mahmud.

Sylvana Quader Sinha said, "There needs to be an increased focus on developing and integrating technology-based healthcare facilities in the country. Patients should no longer be responsible for maintaining their own medical records and carrying them from doctor to doctor. Better systems and record keeping, just to start, can go far in improving the quality of care. In addition, trust in the entire system needs to be improved by ensuring standards of quality. Government bodies like

availability of high-quality medical care within the country. This lack of information leads them to believe that the best option for medical treatment is abroad. It is important for the government and private sector to increase awareness and educate the public about the country's healthcare facilities and services to reduce the need for medical tourism.

By Feda Al Hossain  
Photo: Praava Health and Evercare Hospital Dhaka

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