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Apollo to set up 200 diabetes clinics in India

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Private sector health care major Apollo Hospitals on Saturday announced it will set up 200 clinics across the country to provide a comprehensive diabetes management.

The company launched on pilot basis two diabetes management clinics here, and plans to set up 50 clinics over the next six months and 150 more by December 2009 in various parts of the country.

Named Sugar, these clinics will provide comprehensive diagnosis and evaluation, education, and treatment, including life-style support to the diabetics. "This is a major initiative to combat diabetes which has assumed epidemic proportions in the country," Apollo Hospitals Group chairman Pratap C. Reddy said.

He told reporters that Rs.400 million were earmarked for setting up the 200 clinics.

Apollo signed a memorandum of understanding for the purpose with MSD Pharmaceuticals Pvt Ltd, the Indian subsidiary of Merck, a research-driven global pharmaceutical company based in the US.

MSD managing director A. Naveen Rao said his company would provide scientific inputs, Merck's software tool specific for the development of the structured care protocol (SCP) to manage the diabetic patients, training to physicians and paramedics and patient education content.

According to Reddy, India is considered the global capital of diabetes and it is projected that every fifth adult in the country would be a diabetic. There are 32 million diabetics in the country and the number is likely to reach 80 million by 2030.



"It is projected that India will need to spend a whopping \$30 billion by 2030 to manage the disease burden created by diabetes," he said.

The Sugar clinics will focus on identification and management of pre-diabetics. "A scientific screening programme will identify those who are likely to become diabetics in near future and they will be taken through a life style management programme to prevent or delay onset of diabetes," Apollo chief executive K. Hari Prasad said.

The clinics will also offer year-long disease management programme, including controlling blood sugar level and early intervention for complications of diabetes