

## Budget hasn't met expectations of medical devices sector says AdvaMed

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**NEW DELHI:** Though it has welcomed the import duty exemption for dialysis equipment, the Advanced Medical Technology Association (AdvaMed) is of the opinion that the budget falls short of addressing the needs of patients and vitality of the sector by maintaining import duties on most devices across the board.

“While the budget has many positives, the Finance Minister could have done more to bring the much-needed momentum in the growth of the country as a med tech hub and a leading global destination for life sciences,” mentioned, Mr Varun Khanna, Chairman of Advanced Medical Technology Association (AdvaMed) India working group.



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**Varun Khanna, Chairman, AdvaMed & Managing Director, BD India/South Asia**

Mr Khanna elaborated further, “We welcome the duty cut on select dialysis equipment under National Dialysis Programme as well as equipment used for the differently abled. While these measures are a step in the right direction with the government’s recognition of the benefits from excise duty reduction on medical devices, duty reductions should be extended to other life saving technologies to reduce the cost of treatment and burden on patients. Higher import duties deter introduction of innovative and high- quality devices for better patient care in India. Reduction in import duties should have been top priority for enhancing domestic industry competitiveness.”

The association expressed disappointment on no increase in public healthcare spending. India’s meager health spend from the public sector – a little over 1 per cent of GDP is highly inaccurate to aptly meet the requirement for a country like India including the poor and the vulnerable. “An increase in healthcare spending from 1.3 per cent to 5 per cent of the GDP would have been ideal,” it said.

AdvaMed welcomed the social sector focus of the union budget. Expanding the ambit of social health insurance and introduction of the New Health Protection Scheme for the elderly is a step in the right direction and will promote universal health coverage with respect non-communicable and communicable diseases.

The statement further stated that the Medical Devices industry continues to urge the government of India to implement a separate regulatory framework for the medical devices sector which will enable international and domestic manufacturers better address the needs – availability, affordability and access – of Indian patients and give the much needed fillip to the sector.