

National Health Policy & Drug Standards

- **India continues strengthening its pharma standards:** The government released the **10th edition of the *Indian Pharmacopoeia 2026***, updating drug standards and adding 121 new drug monographs to improve safety and quality across therapeutic areas such as anti-TB, anti-diabetic and anti-cancer medicines.
- **Global pharmacovigilance leadership:** India rose from **123rd to 8th place globally** in contributions to the *WHO pharmacovigilance database*, reflecting stronger adverse-event reporting and drug safety systems.

Healthcare Access & Insurance

- **Punjab expands health coverage:** The state government will launch the **Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna on Jan 15**, offering **₹10 lakh cashless medical insurance per family**.
- **Delhi increases free care eligibility:** Delhi doubled the annual income cap for Economically Weaker Section (EWS) citizens eligible for free treatment in private hospitals — from ₹2.2 lakh to **₹5 lakh** — improving access to care.

Medicine Pricing & Regulation

- **Crackdown on drug overpricing:** Haryana authorities forwarded **33 cases of medicine overcharging** to the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority for enforcement, part of efforts to ensure medicines sell at regulated rates.

Health Infrastructure & Innovation

- **Digital healthcare expansion in Assam:** RailTel will **digitise healthcare services** in seven medical colleges and hospitals, aiming to modernise record-keeping and telemedicine access.
- **AI education for doctors:** The National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences launched a **free online “AI in Medicine” course** for doctors starting January, to integrate AI into clinical and educational settings.

Public Health Initiatives

- **Punjab maternal health efforts:** A new protocol-driven antenatal care push is bringing ~20,000 pregnant women per month to clinics for free ultrasounds and essential tests, aiming to cut high maternal mortality rates.
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Broader Health Trends (Context)

Aside from today's headlines, recent reports highlight major challenges shaping India's healthcare landscape:

- **Healthcare affordability crisis:** A survey found **71% of Indians feel medical costs have surged**, and many skip treatment despite insurance coverage.
- **Antimicrobial resistance warning:** Experts warn that **misuse of antibiotics is accelerating resistance**, making common infections harder to treat and underscoring the need for strict stewardship policies.