

## About us





Voice of Healthcare (VOH) is a not-for-profit organization. It serves as a central body and visionary think tank focused on public health awareness, policy advocacy, idea mobilization, and sustainable advancement in healthcare. VOH collaborates with various stakeholders in the healthcare industry to address a wide range of pressing issues and promote shared learning and innovation. VOH operates dynamic platforms that bring together corporates, institutes, and individuals to facilitate collaboration and transformative change. These platforms aim to foster significant, timely, and long-lasting transformations in the healthcare landscape. The organization's goals include bridging gaps, mapping outgrowth strategies, and advancing together in the field of healthcare.

One of VOH's key initiatives is the VOH Network, which serves as a digital events and broadcasting platform. Through this platform, individuals and organizations can amplify their voices and contribute to change. It provides a credible and powerful avenue for thought leadership, brand building, trust establishment, and connecting with new audiences and unexplored markets in the healthcare and allied sectors.

The organization operates across multiple domains, offering services in advocacy, connections, media, public relations, academy, startup support, events, and business-related activities. This comprehensive approach allows VOH to have a broad impact on the healthcare industry by leveraging its diverse capabilities and networks. Overall, VOH aims to bring together stakeholders from various sectors and facilitate collaboration, knowledge sharing, and innovation to drive positive change and advancements in healthcare.

VOH verticals are as: VOH EVENTS | PUBLIC HEALTH AWARENESS VOH ACADEMY | VOH NETWORK | VOH CSR | VOH INCUBATOR



#### **Overview**

Praxis Global Alliance is a next-gen management consulting firm started by ex-Bain- Mr Aryaman Tandon and Madhur Singhal who are also head of respective verticals. (Profiles attached), transforming how consulting projects are executed by combining domain expertise, Al-led research, and digital technologies. We operate through three business units:

- Transactions (pre-deal support, commercial due diligence, and post-acquisition strategies)
- Strategy & Transformation (practitioner-led business advisory)
- PraxDigital<sup>TM</sup> (data engineering, AI, and analytics)

With a presence across India, UAE, and Saudi Arabia, and a team of 200+ consultants, we've successfully served clients in over 40 countries, partnering with C-suite executives to drive organizational transformation and growth across industries like Agritech, Fintech, Healthtech, and more.



# Introductory sessions- 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of NATIONAL DIAGNOSTICS FORUM & AWARDS 2025

Special address by Dr. Daksha Shah – Chief Executive Officer (Public Health Department), Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, Theme Address Dr Ravi Gaur Founder DRG PATH Lab and special address by Dr. Avinash Phadke, Founder- Dr. Avinash Phadke Labs; President & Mentor -Agilus Diagnostics



**Dr. Daksha Shah** highlighted the launch of the Genome India project by the Prime Minister, positioning India as a leader in genomics and personalized healthcare. They discuss advancements in diagnostics, including smart technologies like contact lenses and smart toilets for health monitoring. She also emphasized the growing role of diagnostics in public health, noting the shift from communicable to non-communicable diseases and the importance of AI, digital platforms, and personalized care. She mentioned the ongoing efforts in genomic sequencing for TB and other diseases in the public sector and the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors to improve healthcare accessibility and affordability and concluded by highlighting the need for balanced innovation, quality, and patient-centric approaches to improve health outcomes and reduce disparities.



**Dr. Ravi Gaur,** underscored the essential role of diagnostics in healthcare, calling it the "voice of healthcare" and the cornerstone of effective treatment. Reflecting on its evolution, Dr. Gaur highlights how COVID-19 elevated diagnostics to the forefront, with healthcare facilities now emphasizing diagnostic centers. He shares a personal anecdote from a trip to Switzerland, illustrating how a quick diagnostic test led to prompt treatment. This contrasts with the challenges in remote parts of India, where delays in diagnostics often occur due to insufficient infrastructure. Dr. Gaur advocates for increasing the accessibility and affordability of diagnostics, emphasizing the use of advanced technologies like AI and data analytics to enhance speed and accuracy. He introduces the concept of "smart toilets," a technology that could enable early detection of health issues through connected devices. While embracing innovation, Dr. Gaur stresses the importance of retaining the human element in healthcare, ensuring that diagnostics are not just about data, but about providing hope and clarity to patients. He concludes by calling for a collaborative approach between the public and private sectors to improve diagnostic access, starting with basic tests in primary healthcare settings.



Dr. Avinash Phadke addressed the third edition of the National Diagnostic Forum organized by Voice of Healthcare, discussing the evolution and importance of diagnostics in India. He emphasized that 70% of medical diagnoses depend on pathology, and outlined several categories of diagnostics, including preventive, infectious disease, lifestyle-related diseases, and oncology. Dr. Phadke highlighted the growing concern over lifestyle diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and heart diseases, which are becoming more prevalent in India. He also spoke about the increasing role of diagnostics in the early detection and treatment of infectious diseases and cancers, particularly with advancements in molecular testing and personalized medicine. He urged a focus on preventive health and lifestyle interventions, noting the risks associated with certain weight loss medications and the importance of addressing lifestyle factors before medication. Dr. Phadke also called attention to the rising cancer rates in India, especially cancers of the head and neck, and the need for more individualized cancer treatment based on molecular testing. Additionally, he highlighted the critical issue of environmental pollution, particularly air quality, which affects public health, particularly in urban areas. He stressed that environmental health should be a national priority, urging that both healthcare and environmental issues be addressed as critical election issues for the country.



## Plenary discussion I: Leadership in Diagnostics – Building Resilient and Future-Ready Systems



#### **Speakers**

- Dr. Avinash Phadke, Founder- Dr. Avinash Phadke Labs; President & Mentor -Agilus Diagnostics;
- Mr. Vijay Kumar, Chief Commercial Officer, Transasia Bio-Medicals Ltd;
- Mr. Puneet Gupta, Chief Operating Officer, POCT Services;
- Dr Ravi Gaur, Founder DRG PATH Lab and Chairman Medical Advisory Committee, Oncquest Laboratories Ltd.

#### **Overview**

The panel discussion revolved around leadership in diagnostics focused on the evolution of diagnostic practices and the essential leadership qualities necessary for fostering innovation and enhancing healthcare accessibility. Key topics include the evolution of diagnostic technology, the need for rapid innovation while ensuring quality and affordability, the significance of point-of-care testing for underserved populations, the importance of data privacy and ethical standards, and the necessity of public-private partnerships to improve healthcare access, particularly in rural areas. Overall, the discussion emphasises the vital role of leadership and collaboration in advancing diagnostic systems.

### **Key discussion points**

**Dr. Avinash Phadke** shared insights from his extensive experience, highlighting advancements from basic microscopy to sophisticated molecular pathology, as well as innovations in microbiology. He also emphasized key leadership qualities: Good interpersonal skills and team-building abilities, integrity and loyalty, being secure and allowing team members to grow and flourish and also recommended psychometric evaluation for leadership roles.

**Mr. Vijay Kumar** discussed innovation strategies: Ambition as a driving force for innovation and emphasized on crunching timelines for innovation without compromising quality by leveraging country standards (e.g., BIS certification) and back-end R&D integration. He also emphasized the need to simplify technology to ensure accessibility across all regions.



**Mr. Puneet Gupta** highlighted the importance of Point of Care (POC) testing devices: POC services managing 350+ district hospital labs and 35+ medical colleges, Penetration into tier 3 and tier 4 towns, and highlighted the leadership strategies for implementing POC devices in remote areas the most prominent ones being leading by example, continuous education and training for team motivation and celebration of success with the team.

**Mr. Vijay Kumar** further highlighted the need for collaboration for wider reach with higher emphasis on public-private partnership. Dr. Avinash Phadkay discussed the reason behind data security and confidentiality challenges stating that only 2,300 out of 120,000 pathology labs in India are NABL certified and only 15K-18K labs are manned by MD pathologists. Accreditation bodies ensure data security and software evaluation, and hence currently India faces challenges in enforcing data security in non-certified labs.

The discussion covered the critical role of Point of Care (POC) testing, particularly in rural areas, stressing the importance of continuous education and collaboration to expand services. Data security and the challenges of achieving certification in pathology labs were also addressed, alongside the need for public-private partnerships to improve healthcare access. The panel concluded by discussing the disparities in healthcare between urban and rural regions and underscored the necessity for increased government investment in healthcare initiatives, particularly in underserved areas. Action items were identified for further development in addressing these challenges.

## **Top of Form**

Plenary Session II: Emerging Biomarkers: Unlocking new frontiers in early diagnosis and prognosis



### **Speakers**

- Dr. Sridhar Sivasubbu, Chief Diagnostics and Research Officer and Lab Director, Karkinos Healthcare Pvt Ltd, India;
- Dr. Rajesh Bendre, Chief Pathologist and National Technical Head, Global Reference Laboratory, Apollo Diagnostics
- Pvt Ltd; Bhaumik
- H. Trivedi, Deputy Manager Business Development CRO & Clinical Diagnostics, Shimadzu Analytical (India) Pvt.
  Ltd.
- Dr. Ajay Avinash Phadke, Director, Strategy & Business Development, Agilus Diagnostics;
- Tanya Julka, Head Marketing, Roche Diagnostics India;
- Dr Pravin D Potdar, Chairman, Institutional Ethics Committee, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Educational and Research Centre and Scientific Advisory Committee Member, PredOmix Pvt Ltd (Moderator)



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#### Overview

The panel discussion focused on the critical role of emerging biomarkers in the early diagnosis and treatment of diseases, particularly cancer. Key themes included the importance of early detection to improve patient outcomes, the challenges in adopting molecular diagnostic techniques, and advancements in analytical technologies. The discussion highlighted the growing trend of patient empowerment in health management and the need for scalable, practical diagnostic solutions. Overall, the session underscored the necessity for collaborative efforts to enhance biomarker research and improve healthcare delivery across various therapeutic areas.

#### **Key discussion points**

The Panel Discussion focused on emerging biomarkers for early disease diagnosis, particularly in cancer, under the guidance of **Dr. Praveen Potdar**, who highlighted his research on novel genes and the p53 protein. Panellists discussed various genomic biomarkers, including DNA, RNA, and epigenetic markers, emphasising their importance for screening despite the challenges of adopting molecular diagnostics due to high costs and the need for specialised bioinformatics.

**Dr. Sridhar** further discussed the classification of genomic biomarkers into germline mutations, somatic mutations, and RNA-based biomarkers. He further explained how germline mutations can serve as powerful diagnostic tools for early detection and personalised treatment. He also highlighted the emerging significance of RNA biomarkers in understanding disease mechanisms and developing new diagnostic approaches.

**Dr. Rajesh Bendre** discussed challenges in adopting molecular diagnostic techniques highlighting the high costs of NGS equipment and need for specialised bioinformatics teams. He also emphasized the importance of developing databases that represent the Indian population to improve the accuracy of genetic testing and highlighted the necessity of quality control and accreditation processes to ensure reliable molecular diagnostics.

**Dr. Bhaumik Trivedi** elaborated on the role of advanced analytical techniques like chromatography and mass spectrometry, stressing the need for need for improved sensitivity and resolution in these technologies to facilitate early diagnosis. He also advocated for a multi-omic approach that integrates genomic, proteomic, and metabolomic data for a comprehensive understanding of diseases.

**Dr. Ajay Avinash Phadke** highlighted the limitations of existing cancer biomarkers, such as CA125 and PSA, which often have low positive predictive values. He also discussed the potential of circulating tumour DNA and stem cell detection for improving early diagnosis and later explained the applications of flow cytometry in immune profiling and its relevance in diagnosing immune deficiencies and infectious diseases.

Mrs. Tanya Julka Provided insights into the growing trend of patients taking control of their health, leading to increased demand for accessible diagnostic tests. She also highlighted innovations such as self-sampling for cervical cancer and the integration of artificial intelligence in diagnostics. Additionally, she also emphasized the importance of point-of-care testing to enhance access to healthcare services, particularly in tier 2 and tier 3 cities.

To conclude, Dr. Sridhar emphasized the vital role of collaborations in genomic research, highlighting India's genetic diversity as a resource for biomarker discovery and encouraging collective efforts like Truvita. Dr. Rajesh outlined the importance of adhering to ISO 15189:2022 standards across pre-analytical, analytical, and post-analytical phases, stressing logistics, quality controls, and data security in molecular diagnostics. Dr. Bhaumik called for practical, scalable solutions like MALDI-TOF for diagnostics and emphasized bridging gaps between research, validation, and real-world application through collaboration. Dr. Ajay discussed the significance of molecular diagnostics in targeted treatments, allergy testing, and oncology, advocating for robust infrastructure, public-private partnerships, and point-of-care testing to improve access and Mrs. Tanya highlighted key therapeutic areas such as cancer, women's health, respiratory conditions, and neurology, emphasizing early detection, tailored interventions, and addressing population-specific health needs through advanced molecular diagnostics.



## Plenary Session III: Tackling Antimicrobial Resistance: A multistakeholder approach to emerging infectious



#### **Speakers**

- Dr. Subhash Hira, Professor of Global Health, University of Washington-Seattle, USA & Distinguished Professor of Public Health & Infectious Diseases, PHFI, Gurugram Health Advisor, ISRN, New Delhi
- Dr. Dhanasekaran Shanmugam, Sr. Pr. Scientist, CSIR and Prof. AcSIR, Biochemical Sciences Division CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory
- Dr. Maithili Kavathekar, Director Lab Services, Sahyadri Hospitals Pvt Ltd, Sahyadri Speciality Labs
- KG Venkateswaran, Lead Strategy, PATH
- Dr. Shareek P S, Infectious Disease Specialist, SUT Pattom Superspeciality Hospital
- Mrs. Suchita Dayanand, Head Clinical Diagnostic and Transplant Diagnostic Division, Thermo Fisher Scientific
- Mr. Varun Suneja, Senior Regional Marketing Manager, APAC, Cepheid
- Dr. Kuldeep Singh Sachdeva, President and Chief Medical Officer, Molbio Diagnostics (Moderator)

#### **Overview**

The panel discussion on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) focused on the urgent need for interdisciplinary collaboration to address the challenges posed by AMR and emerging infectious diseases. Key points included the significant burden of AMR, with high mortality rates, and the critical role of accurate diagnostics, such as molecular testing and next-generation sequencing. The discussion highlighted the importance of a holistic approach that considers environmental and agricultural factors, as well as the necessity for partnerships between public and private sectors to enhance diagnostic capabilities, especially in low- and middle-income countries. Challenges in antibiotic prescribing were addressed, emphasising the need for greater awareness among healthcare providers and the public. Preventive measures, including vaccination and infection control, were underscored as vital strategies. The need for data sharing and continuous monitoring was also highlighted, along with a call for harmonised testing protocols to ensure consistency in diagnostics.

### **Key discussion points**

The panel discussion on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) brought together a diverse group of experts to address the escalating global challenge posed by AMR and the urgent need for innovative solutions. Moderated by Dr. Kuldeep Singh Sachdeva, the session opened with a stark reminder of the significant burden of AMR, particularly in countries like India, where estimates suggest that approximately 300,000 deaths occur annually due to direct AMR-related



causes. Dr. Sachdeva highlighted the critical role of diagnostics in combating AMR, emphasising the necessity for reliable data at both national and international levels to inform effective strategies. He called for interdisciplinary collaboration, recognising that tackling AMR requires a concerted effort from various sectors, including healthcare, research, and public policy.

**Dr. Subhash Hira** contributed to the discussion by distinguishing between emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, using COVID-19 and Ebola as prominent examples. He characterised the 21st century as a pivotal period for infectious diseases, predicting that the challenges related to AMR will continue to grow in complexity and scale. Dr. Hira introduced the concept of "Disease X," referring to unknown pathogens that could emerge in the future, thereby underscoring the importance of preparedness and proactive measures in public health.

**Dr. Dhanasekaran** further reinforced the need for a holistic approach to AMR, which encompasses not only human health but also environmental and animal health. He advocated for collaborative research efforts that involve academia, industry, and clinicians to better understand the mechanisms of AMR and to develop innovative interventions that can effectively mitigate its impact.

**Mr. Venkateswaran** highlighted the need for innovative partnerships to effectively tackle emerging infectious diseases. He referenced the "100 days Mission" for vaccine development and argued that diagnostics should be produced even more swiftly. He discussed challenges in obtaining reliable reagents and standards for diagnostics and mentioned efforts to create a regional library of these resources in collaboration with the WHO and emphasised the importance of building diagnostic capabilities in the Global South, where the burden of infectious diseases is highest, and additionally outlined ongoing initiatives to enhance local capacities for disease detection and management.

The discussion also addressed the practical challenges faced by clinicians in antibiotic prescribing, as highlighted by **Dr. Shareek.** He noted the pressure from patients for immediate treatment, which often leads to inappropriate antibiotic use and contributes to the growing problem of resistance. **Dr. Shareek** emphasised the importance of awareness among healthcare providers regarding the responsible use of antibiotics, as well as the need for clear guidelines to support clinical decision-making.

**Mrs. Suchita Dayanand** highlighted the urgency of addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR), stressing early diagnosis, targeted treatments, and antibiotic stewardship. Technologies like PCR-based assays and NGS play a key role, with NGS enabling personalized treatments and surveillance. Al integration in diagnostics and research is crucial for improving data analysis and combating AMR.

Mr. Varun Suneja focused on the rapid advancements in diagnostic technologies and the importance of enhanced surveillance and data sharing to inform public health strategies. He pointed out that effective surveillance is crucial for identifying resistant strains and understanding their spread, which can ultimately help mitigate the impact of AMR. The panellists collectively underscored the complexity of AMR and the urgent need for collaborative efforts across various sectors, including public health, research, and clinical practice. They called for a multi-stakeholder approach that involves not only healthcare professionals but also policymakers, researchers, and the public to effectively combat this pressing global health threat.

Further, **Dr. Hira** emphasized the need for collaboration across stakeholders, including diagnostics companies, public health institutions, and academia, to better forecast and manage pandemics. Dr. Dhanasekaran highlighted the importance of data integration and continuous surveillance, while Mr. Venkateswaran discussed leveraging Al and predictive analysis through partnerships to guide public health decisions.

**Dr. Shareek** stressed the need for timely molecular diagnostics in critical care, and Dr. Suchita showcased the success of point-of-care testing during COVID-19 through policy alignment and public-private partnerships. **Mr. Varun Suneja** called for harmonizing testing protocols, collaborating with guideline creators, and sharing resources to ensure accurate and timely diagnostics, ultimately improving patient outcomes.

In conclusion, the panel highlighted that addressing AMR is not solely a clinical challenge but a multifaceted issue that requires a comprehensive strategy encompassing prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and public awareness. The discussion served as a clarion call for increased collaboration and innovation in tackling AMR, with the recognition that the future of global health depends on our ability to respond effectively to this growing crisis.





## Plenary Session IV: Digital Diagnostic Solutions – Transforming Pathology and Radiology



#### **Speakers**

- Mr. Rahil Shah, Director, NM MEDICAL
- Mr. Chander Shekhar Sibal, Senior Vice President, Medical Division, Fujifilm India Pvt. Ltd.
- Dr Kirti Chadha, Chief Scientific & Innovation Officer; Group Head CSR; Senior Oncopathologist, Metropolis Healthcare
- Dr. Deepak Patkar, Director, Medical Services & Head, Department of Imaging, Nanavati Max Super Speciality Hospital
- Dr. Anirudh Kohli, Chief Executive Officer and Head of Department Radiology and Imaging, Breach Candy Hospital
- Mr. Anoop Mohan Arora, Founder & CEO, ITDOSE INFOSYSTEMS PVT LTD
- Dr. Rajiv Rao, Dean, DY Patil School of Medicine, Navi Mumbai (Moderator)

#### **Overview**

The panel discussion centred on the role of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital technology in pathology and radiology. Key points included the transformative potential of digital pathology for improving diagnostic workflows and access to subspecialty expertise, alongside challenges such as high costs and the need for training. The importance of standardising AI tools and ensuring interoperability across healthcare systems was emphasised, as well as the ethical considerations surrounding data privacy. The discussion also addressed the balance between innovation and affordability in advanced imaging technologies, the challenges of remote diagnostics in underserved regions, and the necessity for regulatory frameworks to support AI integration in diagnostics. Overall, the session highlighted AI's potential to revolutionise healthcare while acknowledging the hurdles that must be overcome for effective implementation.

### **Key discussion points**

**Dr. Rajiv Rao** opened the panel discussion by highlighting the increasing relevance of artificial intelligence (AI) and technology in healthcare, particularly in diagnostics. He noted that while many attendees have some familiarity with these technologies, few are experts, creating an opportunity for shared insights. Dr. Rao introduced the topic of digital pathology, emphasising its potential to reshape diagnostic workflows and improve patient outcomes. He also acknowledged the barriers to widespread adoption, such as high costs and the need for comprehensive training among medical professionals.



**Dr. Raheel Shah** elaborated on the transformative impact of digital pathology on histopathology practices, especially in India. He illustrated how digital tools enable access to subspecialty expertise, allowing pathologists to obtain high-quality second opinions and collaborate with experts from various geographical locations. This capability enhances diagnostic accuracy and significantly improves workflow efficiency. However, Dr. Shah highlighted that high costs and the initial steep learning curve for pathologists remain substantial obstacles to broader adoption.

**Mr. Chander Shekhar Sibal** focused on the need for standardisation in Al tools and ensuring interoperability across healthcare systems to facilitate effective integration. He raised ethical considerations regarding data privacy, emphasising the importance of patient consent and secure data handling. Mr. Sibal advocated for a collaborative approach, where medical professionals and technology developers work together to create effective Al applications that meet clinical needs.

**Dr. Deepak Patkar** highlighted the challenge of balancing innovation in advanced imaging technologies with affordability and accessibility in healthcare. He stressed the need for standardised pricing to ensure equitable access and emphasised training healthcare professionals to use these tools effectively. Dr. Patkar advocated for a cost-effective and patient-centric approach to implementing technological advancements.

**Dr. Kirti Chaddha** discussed AI and digital pathology's transformative role in oncology diagnostics. She highlighted her organisation's adoption of digital pathology to improve diagnostic accuracy and efficiency and stressed integrating AI for cancer subtyping and personalised treatments. Dr. Chaddha called for making these innovations more affordable, ensuring they enhance patient care without increasing disparities.

**Mr. Anirudh Kohli** highlighted the advancements in remote and tele-diagnostics, particularly in underserved regions. He shared his experience in setting up a network of radiation therapy units that centralise planning and serve remote locations, demonstrating the potential for technology to bridge gaps in healthcare access. Mr. Kohli emphasised the need for standardisation in imaging protocols and quality control to ensure reliable diagnoses, advocating for better regulation in tele-radiology to guarantee accurate and timely reporting.

**Mr. Anoop** highlighted the challenge of scaling advanced diagnostic solutions across diverse healthcare settings, emphasising the fragmented nature of the Indian healthcare sector. He advocated for tailored technology solutions to meet the specific needs of diagnostic centres, particularly smaller clinics, and stressed the importance of training healthcare staff to use these tools effectively. The session also explored the challenges of implementing remote diagnostics in underserved regions, calling for supportive regulatory frameworks for AI integration. Overall, it emphasised AI's transformative potential in healthcare while acknowledging the hurdles to its successful adoption.

The panel also discussed touched upon the data security and compliance highlighting the importance of compliance with regulations like DDPA, need for de-identifications tools for patient data, interoperability of data, and discussed on software as medical device (SAMD) and related policies



## Plenary Session V: Pre-Analytical Challenges and Solutions in Diagnostics diseases



#### **Speakers**

- Mr. Arpan Malhotra, Director and Chief Operating Officer (COO), Max Lab
- Mr. Paras Gemini, Chief Operating Officer, Credent Connect n Care Pvt. Ltd.
- Mr. Ravi Tomar, Chairman & Managing Director, CRL Diagnostics Pvt Ltd.
- Dr. Kaushal Patel, Managing Director, Endocrine and Allergy Laboratory Pvt. Ltd.
- Mr. Anupa Dixit, President, Lab Medical Services, Suburban Diagnostics
- Dr. Monika Shashank, Medical Director, Dr. B. Lal Clinical Laboratory (Moderator)

#### Overview

The session, organised by the Voice of Healthcare, focused on the pre-analytical phase of diagnostics, the most error-prone stage due to human factors and limited automation. Key discussions highlighted the importance of technology, automation, and AI in reducing errors, improving patient safety, and enhancing efficiency. Optimising sample logistics, especially from remote areas, and rigorous training for staff were deemed essential. Challenges like patient identification, sample collection, and preparation were addressed, with a call for adherence to SOPs and collaboration among labs and logistics providers to improve outcomes.

### **Key discussion points**

**Dr. Monika Shashank** opened the discussion by emphasising the critical role of the pre-analytical phase in diagnostics, describing it as the most error-prone part of the process. She explained that this phase spans from clinician prescriptions to laboratory analysis and is crucial for ensuring accurate outcomes. Dr. Monika highlighted that a significant proportion of diagnostic errors occur during this phase, with implications for both patient safety and healthcare costs. She set the stage by inviting the panel to explore how technology and automation could address these challenges and enhance diagnostic quality.

**Mr. Arpan Malhotra** focused on how technology improves the pre-analytical phase, stressing the importance of maintaining a continuous data thread to track samples from patient booking to laboratory delivery. This data stream, he explained, helps identify and reduce errors, enhancing outcomes and operational efficiency. Arpan highlighted the potential of technology to manage sample tracking and monitoring, ensuring timely and accurate results.



Mr. Paras Gemini shifted the focus to logistics, calling it the backbone of the diagnostic process. He argued that optimising logistics is essential for maintaining sample integrity and ensuring accurate test results. He advocated for training logistics personnel, emphasising their critical role, and suggested exploring accreditation to enhance quality assurance. Paras stressed the importance of collaboration between laboratories and logistics providers to optimise processes and improve patient care.

**Dr. Anupa Dixit** discussed persistent challenges in the pre-analytical phase, noting that many errors occur outside the lab's direct control. She highlighted the distinction between pre-analytical and pre-pre-analytical phases, focusing on errors in patient identification, sample collection, and preparation. Dr. Dixit called for better training, strict adherence to SOPs, and automation to improve efficiency and minimise repetitive errors.

**Dr. Kaushal Patel** addressed specific issues in high-end testing, particularly allergy and endocrine tests, where errors often stem from inadequate knowledge during collection, such as sending plasma instead of serum. He stressed the need for training phlebotomists to understand the implications of their actions and advocated for better collaboration between labs and collection centres to improve accuracy and handling.

**Mr. Ravi Tomar** highlighted the importance of education and training in the pre-analytical phase, noting resistance from technicians as a significant challenge. He emphasised that while analytical processes are standardised, the pre-analytical phase needs more attention. Tomar called for enhanced industry collaboration and communication to improve practices, ensuring accurate sample collection and better patient outcomes.

The panel finally underscored the need for collaboration among laboratories, logistics providers, and collection centres, while considering the cost-effectiveness of investing in quality improvements within pre-analytical processes. Several action items were proposed, including the implementation of technology for data tracking, development of training programmes, advocacy for logistics service accreditation, and collaborative efforts to analyse and rectify pre-analytical errors.



## Plenary Session VI: Future of Diagnostics: Investments, M&A, and Building the Future of Healthcare Innovation



#### **Speakers**

- Sankalp Gupta, Director, Dr. B. Lal Clinical Laboratory Tarun Bhambra, Co-Founder, Orange Health
- Deepak Sahni, Founder & CEO, Healthians
- Rohit Jalan, Chief Business Officer, Redcliffe Labs
- Dr. Rajeev Gautam, Corporate Officer HORIBA, Ltd., Japan, President HORIBA India
- Tarun Bhambra, Co-Founder, Orange Health

#### **Overview**

The panel discussed the future of diagnostics investments, focusing on how M&As are driving healthcare innovation. The rise of at-home diagnostics was highlighted, driven by urban demand for convenience, with a call for better logistics and technology to enhance the experience. Technology and AI were seen as key to improving accuracy in radiology and pathology, though challenges in building trust for tech-driven models persist, especially for newer companies. Regional diagnostic chains face unique hurdles, with M&As offering opportunities to standardize processes and boost efficiency.

India's potential as a diagnostic innovation hub under the "Make in India" initiative was emphasized, highlighting the need for locally tailored technologies and export opportunities. The growing demand for preventive and personalized diagnostics underscores the need for balanced investments in technology, workforce, and infrastructure. The outlook for India's diagnostics industry remains positive, with innovation and strategic investments poised to drive growth.

### **Key discussion points**

Mrs. Garima Malhotra opened the sixth panel discussion on the future of the diagnostics investment market and healthcare innovation. She acknowledged the delay in the schedule but expressed her excitement for the session. She introduced the panelists and set the stage for a discussion focused on how investments, mergers, and acquisitions are reshaping the diagnostics industry and driving healthcare innovation.



**Mr. Tarun Bhamra** discussed the rapid growth of at-home diagnostics, which has grown from 5% to 15% of the industry in the past 5-6 years, with projections to reach 50% by the end of the decade in urban areas. He stressed the need for innovation in logistics and customer service to meet the demand for convenience and efficiency. He also highlighted three key trends: expanding home testing, integrating predictive tools for doctors, and automating labs. The future lies in holistic health measurement, with companies evolving into integrated diagnostic providers offering a comprehensive view of patient health.

**Mr. Deepak Sahani** discussed the role of AI in transforming diagnostics, particularly in radiology and pathology. He highlighted the challenge of establishing credibility in tech-driven models, emphasizing trust and experience. He noted a shift toward preventive healthcare driven by growing consumer awareness and predicted a market rebound by 2025 after post-COVID fatigue. Mr. Sahani pointed to the trend from generic to personalized diagnostics, where data-driven insights are essential, particularly in addressing rising deficiencies like iron and vitamin D.

**Mr. Sankalp Gupta** discussed the challenges of scaling a regional diagnostic chain while maintaining quality. He emphasized the need for robust processes, the right people, and technology to meet quality standards. He noted that scaling requires understanding quality norms and executing effectively, with balanced investments in technology, workforce, and infrastructure based on the business model and growth stage and also stated that technology is emerging as the key enabler of long-term growth.

**Mr. Rohit Jalan** highlighted the role of mergers and acquisitions (M&A) in driving innovation and consolidation in the diagnostics industry. He noted the potential for national players to improve regional processes through M&A. He also discussed opportunities in genomics, which expands product portfolios, and wearables, which engage consumers by collecting real-time health data. He also noted that while genomics will benefit from acquisitions, wearables are better suited for collaborative integration into healthcare solutions.

**Dr. Pushkar Admani** emphasized India's potential as a diagnostic innovation hub, noting the reliance on imported equipment. He advocated for a local ecosystem and Al integration in diagnostics. He highlighted India's opportunity to become an export hub, especially to regions with similar healthcare needs. He noted that automation should optimize workflows, support pathologists, and extend access to underserved areas and also stated that tailored, affordable automation solutions are crucial to address India's unique challenges.

The panel concluded with a consensus on the positive outlook for the diagnostics industry in India, driven by technological advancements, strategic investments, and the potential for M&A. The discussion highlighted the importance of adapting to consumer needs, enhancing quality, and leveraging data to drive innovation in diagnostics. The moderator, Mrs. Garima Malhotra, thanked the panellists for their insights and contributions, emphasizing the need for continued growth and disruption in the industry





Build Together. Win Together.