

## AIR Spotlight: Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission

AIR Spotlight is an insightful program featured daily on the All India Radio Newsonair. In this program, many eminent panellists discuss issues of importance which can be quite helpful in [IAS exam](#) preparation.

This article features an exclusive interview with the CEO of the National Health Mission on the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission.

### Participants:

- Dr. R.S Sharma, CEO, National Health Authority, Ayushaman Bharat
- S. Rangbhasawn, AIR Correspondence

### Historical Background of the ABDM:

- In order to ensure **equitable and inclusive** accessibility of the health facility across the country, **the National Health Policy (NHP) 2017 has envisaged the following goals:**
  - The attainment of the highest possible level of health and wellbeing for all at all ages, through a preventive and promotive health care orientation in all developmental policies, and universal access to good quality health care services without anyone having to face financial hardship as a consequence.
  - The **National Digital Health Blueprint (NDHB)** was envisaged laying out the building blocks and an action plan to comprehensively and holistically implement digital health.
  - With an intention to achieve the above targets, the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) was conceptualised.

### What is Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)?

- The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) aims to develop the necessary ecosystems to support the **integrated digital health infrastructure** of the country. It will bridge the existing gap among different stakeholders of the healthcare ecosystem through digital highways.

Know more about the [Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission](#) in the linked article.



Image Source: abdm.gov

### Objectives of ABDM:

- It aims to establish state-of-the-art digital health systems, to manage the core digital health data, and the infrastructure required for its seamless exchange.
- To enforce the adoption of open standards by all national digital health stakeholders.
- To create a system of personal health records, based on international standards,
  - Easily accessible to individuals
  - Healthcare professionals and
  - Services providers, based on individual's informed consent.
- To adopt the best principles of cooperative federalism while working in tandem with the constituent authorities.
- To promote the development of enterprise-class health application systems with a special focus on achieving [Sustainable Development Goals](#) for health.

**Opportunities for the ABDM:**

- The current digital infrastructure in the form of Aadhaar, Unified Payments Interface and wide reach of the Internet and mobile phones (JAM trinity) provides a strong platform for establishing the building blocks of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM).
- Ayushman Bharat—Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana ([AB-PMJAY](#)) has successfully leveraged the existing public digital infrastructure to provide end-to-end services through an information technology (IT) platform.
- Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, the internet of things (IoT), Blockchain and cloud computing opens up new areas of opportunities for facilitating a more holistic digital health ecosystem.

**Benefits of the ABDM:**

- This scheme is expected to significantly improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of health service delivery across different verticals.
- It will expand the scope of choice for the patients to opt for either private or public hospitals.
- Healthcare professionals across disciplines will have better access to a patient's medical history for prescribing more appropriate and effective health interventions.
- It will also reduce out-of-pocket expenditure that is incurred by the public nowadays.
- Better quality of macro and micro-level data will enable advanced analytics, usage of health biomarkers and better preventive healthcare. As a result, mortality can be reduced by a great number.
- It will promote the use of telemedicine and thus bring health-related benefits closer to the people.

**Conclusion:** Health constitutes one of the most important public goods. Without this, the most vulnerable sections of society would suffer. The ABDM will bring health benefits closer to the people and thereby lead to the democratisation of health services.

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