



Perspective

## The Current State of a General Practitioner in India

Raj Bhushan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Private Practice, Aakash Medicare Vasundhara, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, India.

**\*Corresponding author:**

Raj Bhushan,  
Private Practice, Aakash  
Medicare Vasundhara,  
Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh,  
India.

[drbjbhushan56@gmail.com](mailto:drbjbhushan56@gmail.com)

Received: 28 February 2025  
Accepted: 14 March 2025  
Epub Ahead of Print: 31 March 2025  
Published:

DOI  
10.25259/JCH\_7\_2025

Quick Response Code:



In today's world, the role and importance of a General Practitioner (GP) is of huge significance. GPs with high standards of ethical considerations, awareness of the latest developments, and an adaptive mindset with the evolving modern clinical practices can shape the overall well-being of Indian society in a structured way.<sup>1-3</sup> It is quite apposite to compare the role of a GP to the watchful guard of a large water barrage. In as much that the barrage guard should always maintain a keen and clear eye on the water levels, knowing precisely when and which flow of water to let pass, lest low-lying areas be flooded. Indeed, it is necessary that a realistic mental matrix animates the minds of a GP, with the twin arrays of point-of-care management and higher referrals.<sup>4</sup> The aim, as with all of medicine, remains the same: "Primum non nocere", that is, do no harm.<sup>5</sup> Thus, balancing the twin axes of affordability and accessibility is the fundamental role of the GP.

Medicine is one of the most respected professions in India, with general family physicians playing a crucial role in the healthcare system. They serve as the first point of contact for patients, providing comprehensive medical care across all age groups. Given India's vast population, diverse socioeconomic conditions, and a mix of rural and urban healthcare challenges, family physicians play an indispensable role in delivering accessible and affordable medical services.<sup>6</sup>

From my perspective, I am trying to briefly discuss and explore the practice of medicine by a general family physician in India, covering their role, challenges, patient demographics, work environment, and ethical considerations.

### ROLE OF A GENERAL FAMILY PHYSICIAN

A general family physician in India provides primary health care, which includes:

1. Diagnosis and treatment: Managing common illnesses such as respiratory infections, diabetes, hypertension, gastrointestinal disorders, and skin conditions
2. Preventive care: Conducting vaccinations, health screenings, and lifestyle counseling
3. Chronic disease management: Monitoring conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease
4. Minor procedures: Suturing wounds, draining abscesses, and removing foreign bodies
5. Mental health support: Providing initial counseling for anxiety, depression, and stress-related disorders
6. Referral services: Directing patients to specialists when advanced care is needed.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike 4.0 License, which allows others to remix, transform, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as the author is credited and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

©2025 Published by Scientific Scholar on behalf of Journal of Comprehensive Health

## WORK ENVIRONMENT AND PATIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

### Urban versus rural practice

1. Urban areas: General physicians in cities typically work in private clinics, corporate hospitals, or government health centers. Patients in urban areas have better access to medical facilities, but healthcare costs are higher. It is nearly impossible for a huge section of society to even think of going to big hospitals for day-to-day treatment, while for chronic illnesses, they are in a severely compromised situation
2. Rural areas: Rural family physicians often work in primary health centers or run independent clinics. They deal with a wider variety of cases due to the lack of specialists in villages. Limited resources and infrastructure present significant challenges. For a private physician, practicing in rural areas in itself thus becomes a huge personal challenge, because of financial constraints and poor infrastructure with negligible support from the local Government and associated authorities.

### TYPES OF PATIENTS

1. Children: Treatment of infections, nutritional deficiencies, and vaccinations
2. Adults: Management of lifestyle diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and obesity
3. Elderly: Addressing geriatric conditions such as arthritis, dementia, and cardiovascular diseases
4. Women's health: Maternal care, menstrual disorders, and reproductive health counseling.

## CHALLENGES FACED BY FAMILY PHYSICIANS IN INDIA

### Heavy patient load

With a doctor-patient ratio lower than the World Health Organization recommendation, family physicians often see hundreds of patients daily, leading to fatigue and burnout.

### Limited resources in rural areas

- Lack of advanced diagnostic tools
- Poor infrastructure in government clinics
- Difficulty in accessing emergency services.

### Affordability and accessibility

Many patients struggle to afford health care, leading to delayed medical attention. General physicians often have to balance providing care while managing financial constraints. On the other hand, medical students and practitioners also

face work-life balance issues, psychological challenges, and sleep deprivation.<sup>7,8</sup>

### Competition with specialists and alternative medicine

Patients sometimes bypass general physicians to visit specialists directly. In addition, alternative medicine practices such as Ayurveda, Homeopathy, and Unani medicine compete for patient preference. Institutions like Kottakal Ayra Vaidyasala are doing humongous work for the welfare of patients, but to date, most of the Indian society is unaware of their existence and legacy.

### Medicolegal issues

With increased awareness, patients are more likely to sue doctors for medical negligence. This has led to a rise in defensive medicine, where doctors order unnecessary tests to avoid legal trouble.

### Ethical considerations

A family physician must uphold medical ethics, including:

- Patient confidentiality: Maintaining privacy in sensitive cases
- Informed consent: Ensuring patients understand their diagnosis and treatment options
- Non-maleficence: Avoiding harm through unnecessary treatments or medications
- Professionalism: Treating all patients equally, regardless of social or economic status.

## ADVANCEMENTS IN GENERAL PRACTICE

In today's world, the practice of medicine is advancing at a fast pace. Several private clinicians are bringing modern technologies and practices into their day-to-day practice.<sup>9</sup>

- Telemedicine: Many physicians now consult patients online, improving accessibility
- Electronic medical records: Digital record-keeping is becoming more common
- Point-of-care testing: Portable diagnostic tools help in quick and efficient disease detection.

## CONCLUSION

The role of a general family physician in India is vital in providing accessible and affordable health care. Despite numerous challenges, their contribution to primary health care remains invaluable. With technological advancements and better healthcare policies, family physicians can continue to improve patient care and enhance public health outcomes.<sup>10</sup> The National Medical Commission needs to revamp its current policies for healthcare services as well as

its current regulations of academic promotions and funding for clinicians who are practicing both in institutes and as private practitioners. Their current mandates are outdated and need an overhaul. As of now, GPs have no incentive to even think of publishing and sharing their experiences in medical journals that are getting published in India. It appears that after so many years of independence, we are still indirectly being held at ransom by overseas organizations when it comes to shaping policies for our own country. I hope in time to come, we will see a change.

**Ethical approval:** Institutional Review Board approval is not required.

**Declaration of patient consent:** Patient's consent is not required as there are no patients in this study.

**Financial support and sponsorship:** Nil.

**Conflicts of interest:** There are no conflicts of interest.

**Use of artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted technology for manuscript preparation:** The authors confirm that there was no use of artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted technology for assisting in the writing or editing of the manuscript and no images were manipulated using AI.

## REFERENCES

1. Singh H, Singh R, Singh A, Prashar N, Lachyan AS. Empowering Tomorrow: The Role of Comprehensive Sexual Education in Preventing Unintended Pregnancies and Sexually Transmitted Infections. *J Compr Health* 2024. doi: 10.25259/JCH\_51\_2024
2. Lo B. Fundamentals of Medical Ethics: A New Perspective Series. *N Engl J Med* 2023;389:2392-4.
3. Khan M, Malik A. Evidence Based Medicine: Changing the Modern Clinical Practice. *JMS* 2021;24:1.
4. Fung AW. Utilizing Connectivity and Data Management System for Effective Quality Management and Regulatory Compliance in Point of Care Testing. *Pract Lab Med* 2020;22:e00187.
5. Elston DM. Primum Non Nocere. *J Am Acad Dermatol* 2024;91:25.
6. Palal D, Akhil R. Acknowledging the Role of Family Physicians in India. *J Family Med Prim Care* 2024;13:3475-6.
7. Mishra P, Singh A, Agarwal P, Mathur MK, Bhandari B. Modulation of Sleep Quality, Cardiac Autonomic Activity and Cognition by Yoga in Medical Students. *Ann Natl Acad Med Sci (India)* 2024;60:267-72.
8. Fazal TB, Razzaq Y, Ijaz F, Razzaq A, Zaheer S, Meral U. Comparison of Prevalence of Premenstrual Syndrome Symptoms among Medical and Non-medical Professional Females and its Association with Depression, Anxiety, and Stress: A Cross-sectional Study. *Glob J Med Pharm Biomed Update* 2024;19:7.
9. Kapoor V. Current Updates and Future Prospects of Periodontology in India. *Int J Recent Surg Med Sci* 2025;11:e002.
10. Sharma R, Jatain N, Dodia K, Sapte SM, Khodabux S, Banerjee I. Evaluation of Exercise Rehabilitation Programs to Improve Cardiac and Respiratory Health in COVID-19 Patients: A Systematic Review of Randomized Controlled Trials. *Glob J Med Pharm Biomed Update* 2025;20:1.

**How to cite this article:** Bhushan R. The Current State of a General Practitioner in India. *J Compr Health*. doi: 10.25259/JCH\_7\_2025