

Stent prices in India double that in Europe

Overcharging Rife In Absence Of Regulation

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The government has a Telecom Regulatory Authority of India to regulate prices of telephony, an electricity regulator to control power prices and so on. But India has no body to ensure that medical device companies do not overcharge patients. The result is loot.

Most patients are forced to pay anything between Rs 60,000 and Rs 1 lakh or more for cardiac drug eluting stents, though the same stents cost Rs 28,000-48,000 even in rich European countries and the UK, where there is price control or a fair pricing mechanism for medical devices.

As senior doctors pointed out, almost all the overpriced stents are imported. Hence the government has the bill of entry giving the price at which the stent is being imported, typically a third of the price charged to patients or even less. Yet, the government has done nothing to stop companies and hospitals

3-FOLD RISE

► Drug-eluting stents imported into India by Abbotts Healthcare at ₹40,710 each

► Sold to distributor Sinocare at ₹73,440 apiece

► Distributor sold stents at ₹1.1 lakh each to Hinduja hospital

► Patient charged ₹1.2 lakh, a three-fold jump over import price

Source: Maharashtra FDA report

from looting patients.

The Food and Drug Administration of Maharashtra had done a detailed investigation into overcharging

of various medical devices including stents and had submitted the report to the National

Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority over a year back, recommending that medical devices be brought under price control. The FDA's report included details of other devices too such as cochlear implant, bone cement and orthopaedic implants and pointed out that the price of most devices was hiked by over 100% at least.

► Govt ignores gap, P 9

**PATIENTS
PAY THE
PRICE**

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