

MASTER CLASS- II
EXPANDING HORIZONS IN DIAGNOSTIC CARE

Day: Friday
Date: May 1st, 2015
Time: 4:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.
Venue: Convention Hall, Symbiosis International University, Lavale campus, Pune
Speakers: Dr. Ajit Golwilkar

Dr. Ajit Gowilkar is with the Gowilkar Metropolis Health Services. He began the session by sharing information about the strong presence of Metropolis all over the world. The lab is accredited by NABL and CAP, and it has a global presence of 125 units and 800 collection centers across seven countries. Metropolis offers 4500 types of diagnostic methods, and performs 1.5 million tests a year. It was the first to establish a sustainable, high quality, and strong business model. He also spoke about the emerging market scenario: The market for diagnostic tests in India is growing at 15%, but as much as 95% of the market is fragmented; interestingly, about one million local labs are present in India.

The present market scenario is about disease diagnosis, prognosis, management, and personalized medicine. About 70% of decisions are taken on account of diagnosis. The modern patient is well-informed about preventive healthcare.

Dr. Gowilkar also discussed the changing customer scenario, wherein customers demand high quality health care. They seek out home health service and expert opinion. He said that rapid advancements in technology give rise to test menus, which are expanding in geometric proportions. The demand for quick tests “at molecular level” is high, and genetic testing is gaining popularity.

Dr. Gowilkar elaborated on the challenges faced by the diagnostics sector, such as volatile political situations, instable economic market, variance in labour rules across cities, lack of trained staff, cross-cultural and work-culture differences, high costs of production and infrastructure, and “hub and spoke” arrangement.

Dr. Gowilkar also discussed the cost and volume dilemma, corrupt practices related to financial incentives, missing fixed retail pricing, and disparity in prices between local and national labs. As a result of these problems, very often, customers pay from their own pockets. The speaker stressed that most of these problems can be solved by insurance penetration.

Dr. Gowilkar discussed the ways in which Metropolis manages its brand recognition and recall campaign. The company's approach utilizes health education, home health, social media, mass communication, and informative workshops. This contributes to brand building and reduces local resistance toward lab tests.

The healthcare sector is a lucrative business for investment because leading national and accredited chains are paced for growth. The diagnostics industry alone is estimated to register a 15% annual growth rate.