

Explain the various challenges present e-Sanjeevani telemedicine platform and suggest measures to overcome them.

E-Sanjeevani

- It is a doctor-doctor telemedicine system implemented under Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centre (AB-HWC) programme

- It is developed by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) and launched by the Ministry of Health and family welfare in November 2019

- It provides access to Medical Services digitally under the Curbstone where the formal access to the health services were completely restricted due to the pandemic restriction.

Challenges

This platform faces three major challenges
- 3 A'S → Abuse, Availability & Accessibility

Abuse

- Most of the female doctors faces abuses while providing online Consultation Services

- Patients either make lewd remarks or expose themselves

- No formal registration or proper identification of patients followed.

Availability

- Due to abuses faced by female doctors, they might opt out of the online consultation service in future.
- Also there is shortage in medical professionals/consultants, as the patients have to wait one hour to connect with the consultant
- Specialist consultants were not available most of the times.
- This leads to unsuccessful consultation and makes the public not to use this platform in future.

Accessibility

- E-Sanjeevani platform available only in the video format in both mobile and web application.
- There is no other modes of consultation such as audio, texts or other asynchronous mode of communication
- As ~~the~~ half the population of our country is digitally excluded, it is difficult for them to access the telemedicine services.

Measures to overcome them:

- Proper identification of patients must be followed. Like registering the patients using their Aadhar id and OTP sent through their registered mobile number. This might reduce the problem of online abuse.

- Intake of more number of proper Specialist Consultants and also proper algorithm process must be followed to match the patient-doctor accordingly.

- Establishing the Community based Centres equipped with proper infrastructure facilities like tablets, laptops etc to make access to telemedicine services by the rural people easily.

Way ahead

Besides tackling the above challenges, the government should make use of this opportunity to scale the e-Sanjeevani as the world class telecommunication platform and it could be integrated with our country's larger Healthcare ecosystem.