

Centre pushes for e-payment in hospitals

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In a bid to achieve Prime Minister Narendra Modi's mission to make Indian a cashless economy and enable every Indian to access all kinds of services hassle-free, the Cabinet secretary has asked the Union health ministry to operationalise digital payment facilities in hospitals for all the services possible, including canteens, medicine shops, etc., for patients' convenience.

In a recent letter to the Union health ministry, the Cabinet secretary stressed on digital connect of payment in all hospitals where there is interface with people. "We have got instructions from the Cabinet secretary to move to digital payment system in hospitals' eateries and canteens, medical shops etc.," said a senior official in the health ministry.

Post demonitisation, the health ministry had sent instructions to all government hospitals to start dig-

ital payment of hospital bills. In an advisory to the hospitals, the government had said that it was important that all government health facilities are fully geared up to receive user charges in a digital manner through mobile transactions. "However, for the convenience of people in hospitals, the government now wants service be extended for other facilities as well," the source added. The health ministry has now asked the hospitals to install PoS ter-

minals where one can swipe a debit card for making purchases and also can use them to withdraw cash and also let people pay bills via mobile wallet platforms for all the services.

The PM has for long been highlighting the importance of digitisation, citing e-banking, mobile banking and other facilities such as unique payments interface (UPI) as important tools for shifting to a cashless economy. The government has also

been promoting digital technology through its recently-launched UPI. The national payments corporation of India along with the RBI had launched the UPI app in order to help people transfer money through their mobile device round the clock.

The government after demonitisation has been stressing on ways to fast track digitisation to enable larger cashless transactions and it proposes to expand the scope of digital payment mode.