

# MBA in Health Management: Just what the Dr ordered

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Formal training helps students to effectively manage the health business and mitigate the Covid effects. In the middle of a pandemic, where larger hospitals are exclusively serving only Covid patients, and mid-sized and small-sized hospitals are staring at a survival crisis, having the business acumen and critical thinking skills of an MBA is crucial to navigate the health industry's challenges of the present. The role of a health/hospital manager offers you a wealth of advantages if done right, especially during such critical times.

### What do health managers do?

The hospital/health managers handle the business side of health service — they are in charge of scheduling, budgeting, and looking for ways to improve patient care. Those who opt for a degree in health management/hospital management find jobs in a hospital or manage health programmes. Smaller clinics allow healthcare managers to oversee several disciplines, from marketing and budgeting to human resources and record management. Larger hospitals, on the other hand, offer more diverse opportunities. With experience, one can move into executive roles of COO or CEO of a hospital or manage state or national level programmes in the public health space.

One can also work with national and international consulting firms on strategic management, project management, programme management and quality management. To work with governmental and non-governmental organisations for managing and implementing public health programmes is the alternative option.

### What is the degree programme?

Any student with a recognised bachelor's degree of minimum three-year duration with at least 50 per cent marks in aggregate can apply for such courses. Having a CAT/ XAT/ NMAT/ MAT/ CMAT/ ATMA/ GMAT score can add to their chances. Working professionals, too, can join such courses to further their careers. Some subjects are common to health management/hospital management courses in universities across the world. These include principle of management, health care delivery system, demography, epidemiology, bio-statistics, quality management, human resource management, health economics, financial management, strategic management, disaster management, and so on.

Apart from thorough training in theory, practical experience and scenario-based simulations enhance decision-making and problem-solving competence of the students to face the health industry's challenges and prepare them to lead a team of healthcare workers.

### Ideal career

A career in health/hospital management will help you put all the skills you learned in your graduate programme to good use. A professional health administrator will need a skill-set which may include managerial skills and soft skills. Not only will you be in charge of a team of healthcare professionals, but you will also be working closely with the physicians, too. Apart from representing organisations at meetings, it is expected that they stay abreast of the latest changes in the industry and possess superior communication skills with diligent planning and problem-solving skills.

Today's graduates will also be the frontrunner of technology access, and it is undoubtedly impacting various aspects of life, including data collection, research using new-age tools, and innovative practices. The field of healthcare is evolving, and you no longer have to be on the front lines to carve out a successful career in the industry. The best part about launching a healthcare management career is that you do not have to remain in the same position forever. Health/hospital management professionals can expand towards lucrative roles with more responsibilities — from overseeing the hospital's health information system to working as a top cadre professional in the organisation. Some senior-level positions may require a master's degree.

### Where should you do it?

Some of the premium institutions offering the course are IIHMR University, Jaipur; KJ Somaiya Institute of Management, Mumbai; Acharya Bangalore B-school, Bangalore; Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, Faridabad; Chitkara University, Patiala; Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar; Chandigarh University, M. Birla Institute of Management, Bangalore; Amity Global Business School, Noida; Universal Business School, Karjat; Symbiosis Institute of Health Science, Pune; Manipal School of Management, Manipal; Faculty of Management Studies, Delhi.

Hospital/ Health manager, programme manager, pharmaceutical production Manager, and quality manager are some of the job roles an MBA in Health/Hospital Management should look forward to. They offer a salary between the range of rupees five to 12 lakh per year.

*(The writer is Pro-President and Dean, IIHMR University.)*