ANNUAL REVIEW

Hospital digital in India, 2026

Four forces shaped the year: AI in the patient conversation, consolidation, new beds, and tighter regulation.

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FORCE ONE

AI moved into the patient conversation

- Assistants became a front door for health questions
- Their sources skew to agencies, LinkedIn and US content
- ChatGPT ads arrived in India, but not near health
- WhatsApp consolidated as the hospital front door; consent is design

The opportunity is organic citation, not paid placement.

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FORCES TWO AND THREE

Capital, consolidation and capacity

- Acquisitions made brand architecture a board-level question
- Patient data and systems integration became post-deal marketing work
- Bed expansion raised the question of how beds get filled
- Scheme coverage for older citizens shifted demand mix

New beds only create value when the enquiry and conversion engine is ready.

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FORCE FOUR

Regulation, pricing and trust

DPDP RULES	Notified 14 November 2025; full obligations from May 2027
PENALTIES	Up to 250 crore rupees for security failures
ASCI	Healthcare the most violative sector, mostly on digital
NMC	Norms for doctors and corporate hospitals should not differ

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THE SCALE

958 million

active internet users in India in 2025, 548 million of them rural

IAMAI and Kantar, Internet in India Report 2025.

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BEFORE AND AFTER

What 2026 now demands

DISCOVERY	AI assistants, maps and answer-first pages, not rankings
ENQUIRIES	WhatsApp and calls captured in one CRM
CONSENT	Recorded, purpose-specific, under DPDP
MEASUREMENT	Treated patients and cost per treated patient
BRAND	Architecture across acquired and new units

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FIVE QUESTIONS

For hospital leaders going into 2027

1. Is every enquiry captured with a source and consent?
2. Can we report cost per treated patient by service line?
3. Do our pages answer patient questions directly?
4. What do AI assistants say about us, and who do they cite?
5. Are our claims and data practices ready for scrutiny?

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IF YOU ARE BEHIND

Three things, each doable in a quarter

- Capture every enquiry with a source and consent
- Fix listings and unit pages
- Start tracking what AI assistants say about you

Most published benchmarks come from agencies and vendors. Build baselines from your own CRM.

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READ THE FULL GUIDE

Hospital digital in India 2026, in full

- What changed for patients and for marketing teams
- Key statistics with sources
- How the review is updated through the year
- gauravphogat.com/state-of-hospital-digital-india-2026

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