

Medical devices may get cheaper as govt plans to extend price control

Himani Chandna Gurttoo

■ himani.chandna@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Stents, valves and catheters, among others, may get cheaper by at least 10-15% as the government is likely to extend price control over medical devices, the category that is currently not part of the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM).

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), the body which has the power to fix, revise and regulate prices of drugs in India, is ready to place the proposal on medical devices before the health ministry's newly-formed NLEM panel.

"Life-saving medical devices such as stents, valves, and catheters are as essential as the other drugs in NLEM. This indicates that a set of life-saving devices should also go under price control by becoming part of the revised NLEM list," Injeti Srinivas, chairman, NPPA, told HT.

Devices in some categories, if they come under the price control mechanism of the NPPA, would see a fall of even 60 to 80%, according to the industry experts.

The government recently said that a number of drugs would be brought under the ambit of NLEM, which would result in a fall in their prices.

According to the Advanced Medical Technology Association, an industry association for medical device makers, only two devices — intrauterine contraceptive devices and condoms — are listed under NLEM. There are over 14,000 types of medical devices according to global nomenclature. But, in India, only 14 devices and eight additional products including cardiac stents, cannulae, orthopedic implants are regulated by the Drugs Controller General of India, and are treated as drugs, but are not part of NLEM, which controls prices as per the drug pricing control order (DPCO), 2013.

Price.