

Healthcare firms attract top talent from tech, retail, HR

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DRIVEN by aggressive expansion plans and modernisation of the organised healthcare sector, private hospitals are roping in top managers in their core leadership team. People from sectors like retail, fast moving consumer goods (FMCG), IT and telecom have joined big names like Max, Fortis and Apollo at the CXO level last year, and the trend is expected to continue.

Leadership teams in these hospitals are definitely in a transition mode, with a focus on people with expertise in marketing and corporate strategy, and not just knowledge about the healthcare domain.

About seven months back, in October 2010, Vikram Thaploo, with over a decade's experience in the

HOP, SKIP AND JUMP

Top management	Joined	From	Date
Purva Misra	Director, HR, Max Healthcare	Aon -Hewitt	Dec 2010
Vikram Thaploo	CEO of Apollo Tele Health	Director, Steeplejack Projects	Oct 2010
Pradeep Srivastava	Head Legal & Compliance at Max	NewsX	Aug 2010
Seemant Jauhari	CEO, Apollo Hos Edu & Research	Manager, Nokia Siemens	Jul 2010
Harshvendra Soin	Chief People Officer, Fortis	CPO, Aditya Birla Retail Ltd	Sep 2009
Neena Pahuja	CIO - Max Healthcare	Genpact	May 2009

retail arena, joined Apollo Hospitals as chief executive officer of Apollo Tele Health Services. Prior to this, Thaploo had worked with companies like Jaypee Group, Apeejay Surrender Group, Barista and Big Apple Supermarkets. In July 2010, Seemant Jauhari from the telecom sector joined the hospital as CEO, Apollo Hospitals Education & Research.

Says Jacob Jacob, chief people officer, Apollo Hospitals: "People from other sectors are able to add value to

the top and middle-level management. In the past year, there has been an increase of 8-10% in terms of people joining from other sectors in the top level management of our hospital. Similarly, in the middle level, the increase is over 10%."

Jyorden T Misra, founder member and MD, Spearhead Intersearch, an HR Consulting firm says: "The healthcare sector is in need of leadership talent at the moment. Two years back, the need was not this high and the hospitals only accepted

leadership members from within the healthcare industry. Right now, the consumer sector is a great supplier of leaders for hospitals. We have seen greater hopping from consumer sectors like retail and FMCG to healthcare institutes in the past."

Purva Misra, director, HR, Max Healthcare, has a different view: "At the top level, hiring from other sectors is more aggressive and at the middle level, we are selective in hiring managers from diverse sectors."

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"We are consciously looking for talent from diverse industries like human resources, IT and finance who can uplift the management team in our hospital," Purva says. Purva also joined the hospitals six months back from Aon-Hewitt.

"The healthcare sector is now becoming one of the largest employers in our country. As a result, the industry needs top managers who can manage people well. Thus, we see people from the IT and HR sectors joining the bandwagon," says Ronesh Puri, MD,

global headhunter Executive Access. He mentions that another reason for IT-telecom talent coming to this sector is the extensive adoption of technology by private hospitals.

Misra from Spearhead Intersearch, who believes that the consumer sector was the first to supply top talent to hospitals, explains further: "While the consumer sector would have top level leadership and senior management with a combined strength of 50-75 people, in the healthcare sector, the number stands at 15-20."

He notes that remuneration and freedom to take much-needed management decisions at the top level is a major attraction for CEOs to join the healthcare sector.

The salaries are now on par with other sectors, crossing ₹1 crore per annum at the top level.

At Fortis Healthcare, traction from the retail sector started a bit early as compared to Apollo and Max. At a time when the retail sector was struggling, Bhavdeep Singh joined Fortis as chief executive officer from Reliance Retail. He served from Febru-

ary 2009 till November 30, 2010. Another addition at the top level was Harshvendra Soin, chief people officer, Fortis Healthcare (since September 2009). He was earlier with Aditya Birla Retail.

Thiru, leader, human capital advisory services, Deloitte India, concludes: "This HR evolution in the healthcare sector was bound to happen. It is not necessary that people who have expertise in medical services would also serve as good corporate leaders. Thus, the sector is scouting for talent from other business empires."