

AIIMS online registration kiosks reduce appointment time to 20 min

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NEW DELHI: People with no access to internet can now make online appointments at four kiosks set up at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. The kiosks ensure that patients registered with AIIMS get their appointments online within minutes.

An average of 10,000 patients visit the out-patient department each day and have to queue up for about two hours just to get an appointment. The kiosks have lowered the waiting time to 20 minutes. "This is a soft launch. Once the process is in place, it will take less than 10 minutes," said Dr Deepak Agarwal, addi-

tional professor at the department of neurosurgery, AIIMS.

Though this facility was started last year, it did not take off as many patients did not have access to the internet. "Tata Consultancy Services has been roped in to help with the IT implementation over the next two years," said Dr Agrawal.

Set up a week ago, the kiosks are already drawing a huge number of registered patients every day. The facility will be extended to new registrations, from next month. The new interactive voice response-based appointment system will allow patients to book appointments using their Unique Health Identification number (UHID) by

simply logging in and selecting the department and doctor they need an appointment with.

"People who come here to schedule an appointment generally are patients who don't live in Delhi; many are from villages and don't have internet access. Appointments take about five to seven minutes as we have to consider people's date preferences," said a kiosk operator. "I didn't know the hospital had started this facility. I saw people gathered around these kiosks and enquired about it. It was a pleasant surprise to find a man offering to fix up an appointment for me. The place, however, needs better crowd management," said Banita Lal, a Madhya Pradesh resident.