

HCG Oncology LLP

January 10, 2025

| Facilities/Instruments | Amount (₹ crore) | Rating ¹ | Rating Action |
|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Long-term bank facilities | 47.79 | CARE A+; Stable | Reaffirmed |

Details of instruments/facilities in Annexure-1.

Rationale and key rating drivers

Reaffirmation of the rating assigned to bank facilities of HCG Oncology LLP (HCGOL) continues to factor in its strong managerial, operational and financial linkages with Healthcare Global Enterprises Limited (HCGEL; rated 'CARE A+; Stable') and the demonstrated support it has received from HCGEL in the past, which is expected to continue in the future.

As stated by HCGEL's management and further demonstrated in the past, CARE Ratings Limited (CARE Ratings) believes all subsidiaries including HCGOL (74% holding by HCGEL) are strategically important to the parent (HCGEL) and will continue to get operational, financial and managerial support for the parent entity HCGEL.

For arriving at the parent HCGEL's credit rating, CARE Ratings has considered the consolidated performance of HCGEL and its subsidiaries / step-down subsidiaries / joint ventures owing to strong managerial, operational and financial linkages between them. Rating reaffirmation of HCGEL, on consolidated basis, factors in established brand and strong market position of HCGEL in cancer care treatment. HCGEL's rating further derives support from continuous addition of capacities by HCGEL and increase in patient footfalls, which with growing average revenue per occupied bed (ARPOB) translated into healthy growth in revenues in FY24 (refers to April 01 to March 31) and in H1FY25 (refers to April 01 to September 30) while maintaining profitability and strong cash flow from operations.

The rating also factors in healthy financial risk profile of HCGEL on consolidated basis, despite moderation in debt service coverage indicators in FY24 and H1FY25 owing to rise in debt levels considering several acquisitions and large capex. However, this is expected to improve in the near-to-medium term with stabilisation of ongoing capex and gradual increase in profitability from new capacity additions.

These rating strengths of HCGEL, however remained partially constrained by the company's exposure to the regulated healthcare industry and competition from other established hospital brands. CARE Ratings also takes note of significant expansion plans of HCGEL to increase operational beds capacity to over 2,600 beds (from 1,972 operational beds as on September 30, 2024) through organic and inorganic route, which will be largely funded by its internal accruals.

HCGOL's rating also positively factors in capacity expansion undertaken, and an increase in average revenue per occupied bed (ARPOB), which led to increased scale of operations. The rating derives strength from promoters' extensive experience and long track record in the healthcare industry, and their demonstrated ability to support group entities in case of need.

However, the rating is constrained by HCGOL's moderate financial risk profile, low interest coverage, geographical concentration risk with a single facility, exposure to the highly regulated healthcare industry, and competition from other hospitals.

Rating sensitivities: Factors likely to lead to rating actions

Positive factors

- Improvement in the credit profile of the parent, HCGEL.

Negative factors

- Change in support philosophy of HCGEL towards the rated entity thereby weakening the linkages.
- Deterioration in the credit profile of Healthcare Global Enterprises Limited

¹Complete definition of ratings assigned are available at www.careedge.in and other CARE Ratings Limited's publications.

Analytical approach: Standalone. The ratings however factors in the parentage of HCGEL, from which it derives managerial, operational and financial support.

Outlook: Stable

Stable outlook reflects CARE Ratings' expectations that credit profile of HCGEL along with its subsidiaries will continue to benefit from its brand recall and technical expertise it possesses in the field of oncology.

Detailed description of key rating drivers:

Key strengths

Strategic importance and strong operational linkages with the parent

As stated by the HCGEL management, and demonstrated in the past, all subsidiaries are strategically important and have strong linkages with the parent. HCGOL constituted ~4% of the total consolidated operating income and ~5% of operational beds operated under HCGEL.

HCGEL has demonstrated its support to HCGOL in the form of corporate guarantee towards credit facilities availed by the company. Going forward, CARE Ratings expects HCGOL to continue getting managerial, operational and financial support from the parent, HCGEL.

Established brand and strong market position of HCGEL in field of cancer care treatment

HCGEL is the leading provider of cancer care in India with presence across the entire oncology treatment value chain and runs 21 cancer care hospitals and three multi-specialty hospitals under the brand 'HCG', with a total number of 1972 operational beds as on September 30, 2024. HCGEL is on expansion mode in the past few years, which further strengthens its market position. In October 2024, HCGEL acquired another oncology specialty hospital in Vizag, having bed capacity of 196. HCGEL has presence in 10 states, with predominance in Karnataka, Gujarat and Maharashtra clusters. HCGEL provides medical, surgical and radiation oncology across all centres and deploys latest machines of Cyberknife, Linac, and PET-CT, among others. HCGEL employs over 400 oncologists across departments. Its dominant presence in cancer care treatment is driven by strong brand equity and superior quality of service and partnership with other established medical professionals. The company also operates seven IVF fertility centres under the brand 'Milann' through its wholly owned subsidiary, BACC Healthcare Private Limited (BACC).

Consistent improvement in scale of operations supported with improved operational metrics of HCGEL

HCGEL's consolidated revenue grew by CAGR of ~24% over the period of FY21-FY24 owing to continuous addition of capacities of beds and LINAC (linear accelerator) and improvement in the ARPOB. In FY24, HCGEL's consolidated revenue increased by 12.8% y-o-y (year-on-year) considering increased patient footfalls, addition of beds, addition of radiation and robotic machines, resulting in increased capacity, and supported by improvement in ARPOB. Momentum sustained in H1FY25, with the company reporting revenue growth of 14.6% on y-o-y basis. ARPOB increased from ₹38,042 in FY23 to ₹41,802 in FY24 with majority increase coming from its newly added facilities. ARPOB further increased to ₹45,188 in H1FY25 (against ₹42,058 in H1FY24). profit before interest, lease rentals, depreciation, and taxation (PBILDT) margins remained stable at 17.20% in FY24 (17.60% in FY23) despite of slight drop in AOR to 64.2% (from 65.4% in FY23) as operational beds increased. PBILDT margins improved to ~19% in H1FY25. AOR in H1FY25 was 65.6%, almost stable compared to 65.8% in H1FY24. Going forward, profitability margins is expected to improve gradually due to higher positive contribution from new centers though rising footfalls and the stabilisation of recently added capacities.

At a standalone level, HCGOL reported revenue of ₹73 crore in FY24, which is ~17% growth over FY23 revenue of ₹62 crore. PBILDT margin increased to 11.49% in FY23 to 10.24% in FY24 due to owing to improvement in the financial and operational metrics of the company. Going forward, stabilisation of recently added beds and expected increase in AOR and ARPOB, the company's PBILDT margins are expected to improve.

Key weaknesses

Exposure to regulatory risk and competition from other hospital chains

The company remains exposed to competition from other hospital chains. The company operates in a regulated industry that has witnessed continuous regulatory intervention in the last couple of years. Regulations such as restrictive pricing regulations instated by the central and state governments and stricter compliance norms can have adverse impact on the company's margins. However, consumption of tobacco, obesity, and unhealthy lifestyles have largely contributed to growing incidences of cancer in India. Lack of access to quality healthcare facilities and under penetration of healthcare service in India bodes well for the company's operations with strong brand image and geographical diversification, which is expected to aid in improvement in occupancy levels.

Recent Capex outlays and acquisitions led to increased debt levels and moderation in its credit metrics at the parent level, though remains adequate with expectation to improve in the near-to-medium term, for HCGEL

In FY24 and H1FY25, the company expanded in Ahmedabad with total capex outlay of ₹107 crore, where it shifted a 100-bed facility to newly build 200-bed facility. Further, the company acquired a 100-bedded cancer care hospital in Indore and minority stakes in HCG NCHRI Oncology LLP (oncology hospital in Nagpur) and HCG Eko Oncology LLP (oncology hospital in Kolkata) and 100% stake in Nagpur Cancer Hospital and Research Institute Private Limited (which has the lease of the land on which Nagpur Hospital is operated) in FY24. HCGEL also undertook acquisition of 51% stake in MGCHRI Hospital in Vizag at cost of ₹208 crore (EV of ₹414 crore), in October 24. The company is currently developing two hospitals with a total of 125 beds in North Bangalore and Whitefield, Bangalore, expected to be fully operational by early FY26. It is also expanding its bed capacity in Cuttack by 60 beds, with the potential to expand to 100 beds in the future. Overall, excluding MGCHRI acquisition, the company is planning to incur ₹300-₹350 crore of growth capex in the next two years in FY25-FY26.

The company's overall financial risk profile had shown moderation in FY24 owing to debt funded capex/ acquisitions, though remains adequate. Overall gearing increased from 1.35x as on March 31, 2023, to 2.08x as on March 31, 2024, majorly considering increase in total debt from ₹901 crore (net debt of ₹ 727 crore) as on March 31, 2023, to ₹1,274 crore (net debt of ₹ 1,002 crore) as on March 31, 2024, to fund capex undertaken by the company and partly from increase in lease liabilities from new capacity additions. The company's net debt further increased to ₹1,280 crore as on September 30, 2024, largely due to debt and leases addition from new assets and under construction hospitals. As such, debt service coverage indicators characterised by net debt to PBILDT moderated from 2.44x as on March 31, 2023, to 3.05x as on March 31, 2024. However, comfort is being drawn as total debt comprised of lease liabilities amounting ₹602 crore (~47% of total debt outstanding) as on March 31, 2024, and ₹808 crore (~52% of total debt outstanding) as on September 30, 2024, with most new hospital buildings on rentals with long term contracts. The financial risk profile is expected to remain at similar levels in FY25 owing to ongoing capex plans, which is expected to improve substantially from FY26 onwards, with scheduled repayments of debts and expecting improvement in profitability. CARE Ratings shall closely monitor ongoing capex and debt levels, the impact of which on the company's financial risk profile remains a key monitorable.

At a standalone level, HCGOL's gearing ratios are negative due to a negative net worth, resulting from losses incurred in the previous year. However, these ratios are expected to improve as the company's operations scale up and profitability grows.

Liquidity: Adequate

HCGOL's liquidity position is marked by free cash and bank balance of ₹4.7 crore as on March 31, 2024 (₹14.37 crore as on March 31, 2023). Liquidity is supported by expected adequate cash generation (gross cash accruals (GCA) ₹5.16 crore in FY24), which is sufficient to cover scheduled repayment obligations of ₹4.89 crore in FY25 and minimal capex requirements. The company reported negative working cycle of 56 days as on March 31, 2024, which also supports its liquidity. Liquidity of the entity is adequate considering financial flexibility it derives from being part of HCGEL. HCGEL's liquidity is adequate as marked by healthy cash accruals of ₹208 crore in FY24 against which, its scheduled bank debt repayment obligations aggregating to ₹67 crore (₹124 crore including lease liabilities) in FY25. Part of cash accruals in the coming years will be also utilised towards growth capex commitments involving total outlay of close to ₹300 – ₹350 crore in the next two years (FY25-FY26) for brownfield expansion.

Liquidity is well-aided by un-encumbered cash and cash equivalents of ₹278 crore as on September 30, 2024. However, the company has utilised its cash balance in acquisition of 51% stake in MGCHRI in October 2024, resulting in cash outflow of ~₹208 crore. Despite this, the company is expected to maintain ₹80 crore of cash balance as on March 31, 2025. Liquidity is supported by average available limits under its cash credit limits to the tune of ₹90 crore (average for 12 months ending November 30, 2024). CARE Ratings believes that the company is well-positioned with strong accruals expectations, which with its cash balances, will be sufficient to meet its capex commitments and debt repayment obligations. While the company has debt-funded capex plans in place, the company's liquidity profile is likely to remain intact.

Applicable criteria

[Definition of Default](#)

[Factoring Linkages Parent Sub JV Group](#)

[Liquidity Analysis of Non-financial sector entities](#)

[Rating Outlook and Rating Watch](#)

[Financial Ratios – Non financial Sector](#)

[Hospital](#)

About the company and industry

Industry classification

| Macroeconomic indicator | Sector | Industry | Basic industry |
|-------------------------|------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Healthcare | Healthcare | Healthcare services | Hospital |

Incorporated on November 29, 2014, HCGOL is a limited liability partnership between HCGEL and Dr. Rajiv Bhatt having capital and profit-sharing ratio of 74:26 respectively. The entity operates a 69-bed hospital in Baroda, Gujarat providing cancer care through surgical oncology, radiation oncology, and medical oncology among others. Hospital commenced operations from FY17.

| Brief Financials (₹ crore) | March 31, 2023 (A) | March 31, 2024 (A) |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Total operating income | 62.19 | 72.96 |
| PBILDT | 6.37 | 8.39 |
| PAT | -0.33 | 1.34 |
| Overall gearing (times) | -2.41 | -2.28 |
| Interest coverage (times) | 1.88 | 2.28 |

A: Audited; Note: these are latest available financial results

Status of non-cooperation with previous CRA: Not applicable

Any other information: Not applicable

Rating history for last three years: Annexure-2

Detailed explanation of covenants of rated instrument / facility: Annexure-3

Complexity level of instruments rated: Annexure-4

Lender details: Annexure-5

Annexure-1: Details of instruments/facilities

| Name of the Instrument | ISIN | Date of Issuance (DD-MM-YYYY) | Coupon Rate (%) | Maturity Date (DD-MM-YYYY) | Size of the Issue (₹ crore) | Rating Assigned and Rating Outlook |
|------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Fund-based - LT-Cash Credit | | - | - | - | 3.00 | CARE A+; Stable |
| Fund-based - LT-Term Loan | | - | - | January 2031 | 39.29 | CARE A+; Stable |
| Non-fund-based - LT-Bank Guarantee | | - | - | - | 5.50 | CARE A+; Stable |

Annexure-2: Rating history for last three years

| Sr. No. | Name of the Instrument/Bank Facilities | Current Ratings | | | Rating History | | | |
|---------|---|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|---|---|---|---|
| | | Type | Amount Outstanding (₹ crore) | Rating | Date(s) and Rating(s) assigned in 2024-2025 | Date(s) and Rating(s) assigned in 2023-2024 | Date(s) and Rating(s) assigned in 2022-2023 | Date(s) and Rating(s) assigned in 2021-2022 |
| 1 | Fund-based - LT-Term Loan | LT | 39.29 | CARE A+; Stable | - | 1)CARE A+; Stable (05-Jan-24) | 1)CARE A+; Stable (01-Dec-22) | 1)CARE A (CE); Stable (07-Feb-22) |
| 2 | Fund-based - LT-Cash Credit | LT | 3.00 | CARE A+; Stable | - | 1)CARE A+; Stable (05-Jan-24) | 1)CARE A+; Stable (01-Dec-22) | 1)CARE A (CE); Stable (07-Feb-22) |
| 3 | Non-fund-based - LT-Bank Guarantee | LT | 5.50 | CARE A+; Stable | - | 1)CARE A+; Stable (05-Jan-24) | 1)CARE A+; Stable (01-Dec-22) | 1)CARE A (CE); Stable (07-Feb-22) |
| 4 | Un Supported Rating-Un Supported Rating (Long Term) | LT | - | - | - | - | 1)Withdrawn (01-Dec-22) | 1)CARE BBB- (07-Feb-22) |

LT: Long term

Annexure-3: Detailed explanation of covenants of rated instruments/facilities: Not applicable**Annexure-4: Complexity level of instruments rated**

| Sr. No. | Name of the Instrument | Complexity Level |
|---------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1 | Fund-based - LT-Cash Credit | Simple |
| 2 | Fund-based - LT-Term Loan | Simple |
| 3 | Non-fund-based - LT-Bank Guarantee | Simple |

Annexure-5: Lender detailsTo view lender-wise details of bank facilities please [click here](#)

Note on complexity levels of rated instruments: CARE Ratings has classified instruments rated by it based on complexity. Investors/market intermediaries/regulators or others are welcome to write to care@careedge.in for clarifications.

Contact us

| | |
|--|---|
| Media Contact Mradul Mishra Director CARE Ratings Limited Phone: +91-22-6754 3596 E-mail: mradul.mishra@careedge.in | Analytical Contacts Ravleen Sethi Director CARE Ratings Limited Phone: 91-120-4452016 E-mail: ravleen.sethi@careedge.in |
| Relationship Contact Saikat Roy Senior Director CARE Ratings Limited Phone: 912267543404 E-mail: saikat.roy@careedge.in | Anant Agarwal Associate Director CARE Ratings Limited Phone: 91-120-4452000 E-mail: Anant.Agarwal@careedge.in |
| | Swatantra Swarnim Analyst CARE Ratings Limited E-mail: Swatantra.swarnim@careedge.in |

About us:

Established in 1993, CARE Ratings is one of the leading credit rating agencies in India. Registered under the Securities and Exchange Board of India, it has been acknowledged as an External Credit Assessment Institution by the RBI. With an equitable position in the Indian capital market, CARE Ratings provides a wide array of credit rating services that help corporates raise capital and enable investors to make informed decisions. With an established track record of rating companies over almost three decades, CARE Ratings follows a robust and transparent rating process that leverages its domain and analytical expertise, backed by the methodologies congruent with the international best practices. CARE Ratings has played a pivotal role in developing bank debt and capital market instruments, including commercial papers, corporate bonds and debentures, and structured credit.

Disclaimer:

The ratings issued by CARE Ratings are opinions on the likelihood of timely payment of the obligations under the rated instrument and are not recommendations to sanction, renew, disburse, or recall the concerned bank facilities or to buy, sell, or hold any security. These ratings do not convey suitability or price for the investor. The agency does not constitute an audit on the rated entity. CARE Ratings has based its ratings/outlook based on information obtained from reliable and credible sources. CARE Ratings does not, however, guarantee the accuracy, adequacy, or completeness of any information and is not responsible for any errors or omissions and the results obtained from the use of such information. Most entities whose bank facilities/instruments are rated by CARE Ratings have paid a credit rating fee, based on the amount and type of bank facilities/instruments. CARE Ratings or its subsidiaries/associates may also be involved with other commercial transactions with the entity. In case of partnership/proprietary concerns, the rating/outlook assigned by CARE Ratings is, inter-alia, based on the capital deployed by the partners/proprietors and the current financial strength of the firm. The ratings/outlook may change in case of withdrawal of capital, or the unsecured loans brought in by the partners/proprietors in addition to the financial performance and other relevant factors. CARE Ratings is not responsible for any errors and states that it has no financial liability whatsoever to the users of the ratings of CARE Ratings. The ratings of CARE Ratings do not factor in any rating-related trigger clauses as per the terms of the facilities/instruments, which may involve acceleration of payments in case of rating downgrades. However, if any such clauses are introduced and triggered, the ratings may see volatility and sharp downgrades.

**For detailed Rationale Report and subscription information,
please visit www.careedge.in**