GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RESEARCH

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1390
TO BE ANSWERED ON 1ST AUGUST, 2023

AFFORDABLE MEDICINES FOR AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES

1390. SMT. SHANTA CHHETRI:

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

(a)   whether Government has taken steps to boost research on Autoimmune Diseases in the country:

(b)   if so, the details thereof,

(c)   whether Government ensures making affordable medicines available to Autoimmune Disease patients; and

(d)   if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(PROF. S.P. SINGH BAGHEL)

(a) to (d):   The National Consortium for Research and Development on Therapeutics for Rare Diseases has been established by the Government for promoting coordination R&D efforts in the field of rare diseases for diagnosis and treatment of rare diseases in India. Some autoimmune diseases also belong to the category of rare diseases. Additionally, ICMR has funded the multi-centric study "Strengthening of ICMR-MRUs: Establishment of Autoimmune Diagnostic Laboratories for early detection and management of Autoimmune Disease and empowering MRUs for research in autoimmunity coordinated by ICMR-NIIH, Mumbai" to promote research in autoimmune diseases.

It has been informed by Department of Science and Technology (DST) that the Multiple Sclerosis Section of Neurology Department of Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST) has taken steps to boost research on Autoimmune Diseases and it is one of the centres in the ICMR funded task force project 'Indian Multiple Sclerosis and Allied Demyelinating Disorders Registry and Research Network' which has been established for research in multiple sclerosis and other demyelinating diseases of central nervous systems. A study on cognitive dysfunction in relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis has also been completed.

Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) has informed that various departments of three Central Government Hospitals, Delhi conduct research on autoimmune diseases through a thesis, done by post-graduate residents guided by various faculty members.

To boost the research in autoimmune disease, any new finding or any new experience in the treatment of the patients is documented & shared in the form of publication in reputed journal.

Department of Biotechnology (DBT) has informed that projects have been supported on various autoimmune diseases. One of the studies is a Multi-institutional Network Program on Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) which is an autoimmune disease mainly affecting women in the reproductive age group.

In addition, constituent laboratories of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), namely CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (IHBT), Palampur; CSIR- Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), New Delhi and CSIR- Indian Institute of Chemical Biology (IICB), Kolkata work in the domain of autoimmune diseases.

Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) provides treatment corresponding to a total of 1,949 procedures under 27 different specialties including diseases such as Cancer, Heart Diseases, and Autoimmune diseases etc. Of these, a total of 9 procedures are exclusively related to Autoimmune diseases which are Autoimmune Encephalitis – Plasmapheresis, Autoimmune Encephalitis – Immunoglbulin (IVIG), Myasthenic Crisis (Plasmapheresis), Myasthenic Crisis Immunoglobulins (IVIG), Myasthenic crisis – Plasmapheresis, Addison's disease, Thyrotoxic crisis, Guillan Barre Syndrome (Plasmapheresis) and Guillan Barre Syndrome (IVIG).

Further, the treatment packages under AB PM-JAY are very comprehensive which includes pre-hospitalization expenses including diagnostics, premedication, pre-anesthetic examination, and consultation relevant to the present disease for up to 3 days and the package amount also covers post-hospitalization expenses including drug expenses for up to 15-days under this scheme.

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