

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

**RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1844  
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 19TH DECEMBER, 2023**

**HEALTH CARE OF THE ELDERLY**

**1844 : SHRI DHIRAJ PRASAD SAHU:**

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

- (a) the manner in which Government plans to address the rural-urban gap in health care and nutrition needs among the elderly population in the country;
- (b) the steps taken by Government to reduce the increasing burden of non-communicable diseases among the elderly; and
- (c) the manner in which Government will improve geriatric care support, training for specialized care and help to increase access to health infrastructure for the elderly

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

- (a) to (c) The National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE) of this Ministry envisages to address healthcare needs of elderly population by capturing preventive, curative and rehabilitative aspects in the field of geriatric. The objectives of NPHCE are:
- i. To provide an easy access to promotional, preventive, curative and rehabilitative services to the elderly through community based primary health care approach
  - ii. To identify health problems in the elderly and provide appropriate health interventions in the community with a strong referral backup support.
  - iii. To build capacity of the medical and paramedical professionals as well as the care-takers within the family for providing health care to the elderly.
  - iv. To provide referral services to the elderly patients through district hospitals, regional medical institutions
  - v. Convergence with National Rural Health Mission, AYUSH and other line departments like Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

The Auxilliary Nurse and Midwife (ANM) / Male Health Workers posted in sub-centres are trained to make domiciliary visits to the elderly persons in areas under their jurisdiction, providing them with information on interventions such as Health Education related to healthy ageing, environmental modifications, nutritional requirements, life styles and behavioural changes. The Medical Officer at Primary Health Centre (PHC) gives advice on chronic ailments like Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease, Arthritis, Diabetes, Hypertension, etc. including dietary regulations.

Further, the NPHCE operational guidelines mandate conduct of training programme for elderly health care provider at different tiers of healthcare facilities for geriatric care assistance, special care giving and support to enhance access health infrastructure.

The steps followed under the NPHCE to mitigate the increasing burden of non-communicable diseases among the elderly *inter-alia* include -

- (i) Community Awareness: Public awareness through various channels to sensitize public about the health care of the elderly population at all levels specifically at sub center, Community Health Centre (CHC), Primary Health Centre (PHC), Regional Geriatric Centre (RGC) level and tertiary care hospitals;
- (ii) Scaling up Treatment Facilities: Expansion of Screening and treatment facilities for chronic, terminal and degenerative diseases, acknowledge multiple and chronic diseases among the elderly population and ensure to reserve beds for geriatric health care in public hospitals at districts and RGCs;
- (iii) Rehabilitation Counselling and Referral Services: Setting up of rehabilitation unit for physiotherapy and counselling cells at Community Health Centers onwards. Periodic clinic are organised at Primary Health Centers, Community Health Centers and regular OPD clinics are organised at District Hospitals and RGCs. Setting up of community health center as first referral unit for elderly population as other referral units apart from the last tertiary care for all the lower-tier hospitals.

\*\*\*\*\*