

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

**RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 77
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 3RD DECEMBER, 2024**

**NEW PROGRAMMES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND CARE
IN THE COUNTRY**

77 SHRI RAVI CHANDRA VADDIRAJU:

Will the Minister of Health and Family Welfare be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry has launched any new programmes to improve mental health awareness and care across the country, particularly in rural and underserved areas;
- (b) if so, the specific goals and timelines set for these programs and the budget allocated for their implementation;
- (c) the Ministry's approach for integrating mental health care into the primary healthcare system; and
- (d) whether there are plans to increase the availability of trained mental healthcare professionals in public healthcare institutions and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA)**

(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 77 * FOR 3RD DECEMBER, 2024**

(a) to (c) The Government has launched a "National Tele Mental Health Programme" (NTMHP) on 10th October, 2022, that would function as the digital arm of the District Mental Health Programme to provide universal access to equitable, accessible, affordable and quality mental health care through 24 x 7 tele-mental health counselling services. For this, a toll-free number (14416) has been set up across the country.

Specific objectives of the Programme are:

- i. To exponentially scale up the reach of mental health services to anybody who reaches out, across India, any time, by setting up a 24x7 tele-mental health facility in each of the States and UTs of the country.
- ii. To implement a full-fledged mental health service network that, in addition to counselling, provides integrated medical and psychosocial interventions.
- iii. To extend services to vulnerable groups of the population and difficult to reach populations.

As on 22.11.2024, 36 States/ UTs have set up 53 Tele MANAS Cells. Tele-MANAS services are available in 20 languages based on language opted by States. More than 15,95,000 calls have been handled on the helpline number.

Rs. 120.98 crore, Rs. 133.73 crore and Rs. 90.00 crore has been allocated for National Tele Mental Health Programme (NTMHP) for the year 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 respectively.

The Government has launched Tele MANAS Mobile Application on World Mental Health Day, i.e. 10th October, 2024. Tele-MANAS Mobile Application is a comprehensive mobile platform that has been developed to provide support for mental health issues ranging from well-being to mental disorders.

The Government has established a dedicated Tele-MANAS Cell at the Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC), Pune to extend tele-mental health assistance and support to all Armed Forces service personnel and their dependents, further enhancing the mental health care services available to them.

In addition to the above, the Government is also taking steps to integrate mental healthcare services at primary healthcare level. The Government has upgraded more than 1.73 lakh Sub Health Centres (SHCs) and Primary Health Centres (PHCs) to Ayushman Arogya Mandirs. Mental health services have been added in the package of services under Comprehensive Primary Health Care provided at these Ayushman Arogya Mandirs.

The District Mental Health Programme (DMHP) is implemented under the National Mental Health Programme in 767 districts of the country to detect, manage and treat mental illness at District Hospitals. Facilities are also made available under DMHP at the Community Health Centre(CHC) and Primary Health Centre(PHC) levels and include outpatient services, assessment, counselling/ psycho-social interventions, continuing care and support to persons with severe mental disorders, drugs, outreach services, ambulance services etc.

(d) Under the Tertiary care component of NMHP, 25 Centres of Excellence have been sanctioned to increase the intake of students in Post Graduate (PG) departments in mental health specialities as well as to provide tertiary level treatment facilities. The Government has also provided support to establish / strengthen 47 PG Departments in mental health specialties in 19 Government Medical Colleges/ institutions.

For increasing the number of psychiatrists in the Country, Post Graduate Medical Education Board (PGMEB) of National Medical Commission (NMC) has issued the Minimum Standard of Requirements for Post-Graduate Courses - 2023 (PGMSR-2023) on 15.1.2024. For starting/ increase of seats in MD (Psychiatry), the number of OPD has been brought down to 30 per day for annual intake of maximum 2 PG students with 20% increase for each additional seat. Similarly, the minimum beds required per unit for starting MD (Psychiatry) course with 2 seats, 3 seats and 5 seats in a medical college is 8 beds, 12 beds and 20 beds respectively.

Under the National Health Mission, following types of incentives and honorarium are provided for encouraging specialist doctors to practice in public healthcare institutions in rural and remote areas of the country:

- Hard area allowance to specialist doctors for serving in rural and remote areas and for their residential quarters so that they find it attractive to serve in public health facilities in such areas.
- States are also allowed to offer negotiable salary to attract specialist including flexibility in strategies such as “You Quote We Pay”.
- Non-Monetary incentives such as preferential admission in post graduate courses for staff serving in difficult areas
- Multi-skilling of doctors is supported under NHM to overcome the shortage of specialists.

The Government is also augmenting the availability of manpower to deliver mental healthcare services in the underserved areas of the country by providing online training courses to various categories of general healthcare medical and para medical professionals through the Digital Academies, established since 2018, at the three Central Mental Health Institutes namely National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences, Bengaluru, Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoloi Regional Institute of Mental Health, Tezpur, Assam, and Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi. The total number of professionals trained under Digital Academies are 42,488.
