

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1391
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.03.2025**

NAT-CERTIFIED BLOOD IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS

1391: SHRI AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH

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

- (a) whether Government is aware that the lack of national blood screening standards leads to variations in quality and risks of transfusion-transmitted infections;
- (b) whether Government plans to mandate a standardised national testing protocol, such as Nucleic Acid Testing (NAT);
- (c) the steps taken to ensure uniform access to high-quality tested blood in all hospitals; and
- (d) whether Government will provide NAT-certified blood free or at subsidised rates in all Government hospitals to ensure equitable access?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(SMT ANUPRIYA PATEL)**

(a) to (d): The Government of India already mandates the screening of all donated blood for five key Transfusion Transmissible Infections (TTIs): HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, Syphilis, and Malaria. This screening is mandatory under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, which also mandates licensing of all blood centers to ensure compliance with safety standards.

The blood screening protocols are guided by the Second Edition of the Standards for Blood Centres and Blood Transfusion Services (2022). The Transfusion Medicine Technical Manual (2023) and the operational guidelines for the national EQA program (2025).

There is a significant expansion of Nucleic Acid Testing (NAT) facilities, which adds another layer of safety, particularly for patients requiring repeated transfusions. NAT is now available in prominent Institutes of National Importance (INIs) like AIIMS New Delhi, PGI Chandigarh, Dr. RML Hospital and Safdarjung hospital, N Delhi etc., as well as in leading state institutions. Nearly half of the states now have at least one government facility equipped with NAT testing. Furthermore, the National External Quality Assessment (EQA) Program is being systematically expanded to all States and Union Territories, ensuring the highest standards for blood transfusion practices nationwide and NAT testing facility will also be the part of this EQAS center.

In almost all Government institutions, where the NAT testing facility is available, NAT-certified blood is provided free of cost.
