

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 4289
ANSWERED ON – 01/04/2026

EMPOWERMENT OF SENIOR CITIZENS IN MAHARASHTRA

4289. SHRI DHANANJAY BHIMRAO MAHADIK

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:-

- (a) details regarding welfare schemes for senior citizens in Maharashtra over the last five years;
- (b) how many beneficiaries have received pensions, healthcare support, educational assistance and livelihood programs;
- (c) what steps are being taken to ensure timely delivery of benefits, grievance redressal and increased awareness of schemes; and
- (d) how does the Ministry coordinate with Maharashtra State authorities to promote social inclusion, capacity-building programs and targeted interventions that enhance the dignity, welfare and economic empowerment of senior citizens across rural and urban areas of the State?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(SHRI B.L.VERMA)

- (a) The details of various schemes implemented by the Government for the welfare of senior citizens across the country, including the State of Maharashtra are as under:
 - i. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing an umbrella scheme, namely Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY), for the welfare of senior citizens across the country. The details of the scheme are at **Annexure-I**.
 - ii. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, in October 2024, expanded Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) to provide free health cover of ₹5 lakh per year to all the senior citizens aged 70 years and above, irrespective of their socio-economic status. Further, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been implementing the National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE) since 2010, with a vision to provide affordable, accessible, comprehensive, and dedicated healthcare services to the elderly. At present, all 34 districts of Maharashtra are covered under NPHCE.

- iii. The Ministry of Rural Development implements the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP). One of the components of the scheme is the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), under which financial assistance is provided to elderly persons belonging to eligible households. Under the scheme, a pension of Rs. 200 per month is provided to beneficiaries in the age group of 60-79 years, while Rs. 500 per month is provided to beneficiaries aged 80 years and above.

(b) Number of beneficiaries receiving pensions under IGNOAPS in the State of Maharashtra, a component of NSAP, is as follows:

Financial Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Number of beneficiaries	13,50,000	13,50,000	13,50,000	11,22,920	11,22,920

Healthcare support for senior citizens is provided through multiple initiatives of the Government. The expanded coverage under Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY for senior citizens aged 70 years and above has been implemented in Maharashtra since April 2025, covering 37.07 lakh eligible families. As on 26th March 2026, a total of 8.38 lakh Ayushman cards have been created in the State for senior citizens aged 70 years and above.

Under NPHCE, the number of Senior Citizens provided OPD services in the State of Maharashtra is as follows:

Financial Year	Number of elderly persons (aged \geq 60 years) who availed OPD services at District and Sub-district Hospitals
2023-24	44,78,578
2024-25	79,02,194
2025-26 (upto December 2025)	84,67,876

(c) Senior citizens can register grievances through Elderline Helpline (Toll-free number: 14567) being run by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. This ensures timely and prompt grievance redressal. For enhancing outreach of the scheme, various awareness activities are conducted in collaboration with the States/UTs and central agencies, including the National Institute of Social Defence.

As per NSAP guidelines, the responsibility for implementation, identification and verification of beneficiaries, disbursement and stoppage of pensions and annual verification rests with the States/UTs. The guidelines mandate wide and continuous publicity regarding scheme entitlements and procedures through posters, brochures, media and other outreach mechanisms.

Under AB-PMJAY, all the eligible beneficiaries can avail treatment through a network of 36,229 empanelled hospitals across the country including 16,746 private and 19,483 public hospitals. Under the scheme, a Centralized Grievance Redressal Management System (CGRMS) has been established, along with a 24×7 toll-free helpline number (14555), to facilitate grievance redressal. Beneficiaries can register their grievances through the CGRMS portal or toll-free helpline number. These grievances are monitored through a three-tier mechanism at the District, State and National level with the designated nodal officers and Grievance Redressal Committees at each level. The scheme also includes a comprehensive media and outreach strategy, including advertisements through newspapers, community radio, street plays, digital displays, radio campaigns, mass messaging and telecast of beneficiary testimonials.

Under NPHCE, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities are carried out at district and sub-district healthcare facilities to enhance awareness among senior citizens and the community regarding the availability of geriatric healthcare services, thereby promoting timely utilisation and improved service delivery.

(d) The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment coordinates with the Government of Maharashtra through multiple mechanisms to promote social inclusion and empowerment of senior citizens, including implementation of the State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSRc). Regular review meetings and consultations are held with the State Government to monitor progress and ensure improvements of various components of the AVYAY Scheme being implemented by the State Government of Maharashtra.

As per the NSAP guidelines, implementation-related responsibilities lie with the States/UTs, including beneficiary identification, verification and disbursal. The Ministry monitors and reviews the implementation of NSAP schemes through Performance Review Committee (PRC) meetings, quarterly review meetings, visits by Area Officers, National Level Monitoring (NLM). Further, review and monitoring of the scheme is done by District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committees (DISHA) at the district level.

Under NPHCE, regular review meetings are conducted with State NPHCE units under the National Health Mission to monitor implementation, address gaps and ensure improvement in the quality of geriatric healthcare services.

Annexure referred in reply to part (a) of Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 4289 for answer on 01.04.2026, raised by Shri Dhananjay Bhimrao Mahadik

Details of components under AVYAY scheme are as follows-

- i. **IPSrC(Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens)**- Under IPSrC, grant-in-aid is provided to the organisations for maintenance of senior citizen homes (Sr.CH), continuous care homes (CCH), mobile medicare units (MMU) and physiotherapy clinics. The objective of the scheme is to improve the quality of life of the Senior Citizens, especially indigent senior citizens by providing basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care and entertainment opportunities and by encouraging productive and active ageing. The Department have also formulated minimum standards for Senior Citizen Homes which provides accessible infrastructure across all Senior Citizen Homes throughout the country
- ii. **SAPSrC (State Action Plan for Senior Citizens)**- The Government of India perceives a major and critical role of all the States/ UTs Governments in welfare of senior citizens. Each State/UT is expected to plan taking into account their local considerations and frame their own State Action Plans for the welfare of their senior citizens. Under SAPSrC, the Ministry releases funds to the States/UTs for implementation of their action plans. SAPSrC is being implemented since FY 2019-20.
- iii. **RVY (Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana)**- The scheme aims for providing Physical Aids and Assisted Living Devices for Senior Citizens below poverty line and with the family income not exceed to Rs. 15,000/-per month. The scheme is being implemented since 2017.
- iv. **Elderline**- The National Helpline for Sr Citizens (14567) is to generate awareness about the Act, schemes & programmes being executed by different Central & State Governments and to provide platform to redress grievances of Sr Citizens across the country.
- v. **System of Providing Elder Care (In House) and Assisted Living (PM-SPECIAL)** - The main objective is to bridge the gap in supply and increasing demand in the field of geriatric caregivers so as to provide more professional services to the senior citizens and also to create a cadre of professional care givers in the field of geriatrics.
- vi. **Other Initiatives for Senior Citizens**- In order to solve the problems of healthy and productive ageing, several initiatives are being done across the country. The proposed initiatives are aimed at involving the elders in building up knowledge which can be useful for the society as a whole.
- vii. **Seniorcare Ageing Growth Engine (SAGE)**- The main objective is to promote out-of-the-box and innovative solutions for the commonly faced problems, innovative start- ups would be identified and encouraged for developing products, processes and services for the welfare of the elderly.