

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1358
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22ND DECEMBER, 2017**

AVAILABILITY OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES

1358. PROF. RAVINDRA VISHWANATH GAIKWAD:

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to take steps to improve the availability of essential medicines and make them accessible to poor and needy people in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has appointed a team of experts for assessment of the situation and preparing the list of essential medicines; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)**

(a) & (b): 'Public Health and hospitals' being a state subject, it is the primary responsibility of the States/UTs to improve the availability of essential medicines and make them accessible to all.

Under the National Health Mission (NHM), the Government has rolled out the 'NHM Free Drugs Service Initiative' under which financial and technical support is provided to the States /UTs for provision of essential drugs free of cost in public health facilities based on the proposals submitted by the State UT Governments. The support is also given for various components necessary for effective implementation of the NHM Free Drug Service Initiative, namely, strengthening/setting up robust systems of procurement, quality assurance, IT backed supply chain management systems like Drugs and Vaccines Distribution Management Systems (DVDMS), warehousing, prescription audit, grievance redressal, Information, training, dissemination of Standard Treatment Guidelines, etc. All the States/UTs have reported that they have notified free drug policy in their respective States/UTs.

- (c): No such team has been appointed in the recent past.
- (d): Does not arise in view of (c) above.