

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 37
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND FEBRUARY, 2018**

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER AMONG CHILDREN

37. SHRI B.N. CHANDRAPPA:

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

- (a) whether it is true that there is a drastic rise in the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder among children in the country in the recent decades;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted any survey to find out the increasing number of children affected by autism spectrum disorder;
- (d) if so, the details thereof during last five years including current year, year-wise; and
- (e) the details of measures taken or proposed to be taken to prevent the increasing problem in the country?

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

- (a) & (b): Data on Autism, which is a neuro-development disorder, is not maintained centrally. Autism Spectrum Disorder has been recognized as a specified disability under the Rights for Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.
- (c) & (d): No survey has been conducted by the Government to find out the increasing number of children affected by autism spectrum disorder.
- (e): To address the burden of mental disorders, the Government of India is implementing the National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) since 1982. The Government is supporting implementation of the DMHP under NMHP IN 517 districts of the country for detection, management and treatment of mental disorders/illness. With the objective to address the acute shortage of qualified mental health professionals in the country, the Government, under the National Mental Health Programme (NMHP), is implementing manpower development schemes for establishment of Centres of Excellence and strengthening/ establishment of Post Graduate (PG) Departments in mental health specialties. Till date, support has been provided for establishment of 23 Centres of Excellence and strengthening/ establishment of 46 Post Graduate (PG) Departments in mental health specialties in the country. During the 12th Five Year Plan the DMHP has been restructured to include additional components like suicide prevention services, work place stress management, life skills training and counselling in schools and colleges. Support is also provided for Central/ State Mental Health Authorities, Research and Training and for Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities.