

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4139
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04TH JANUARY, 2019**

SHORTAGE OF CANCER SPECIALISTS

4139. SHRI SIRAJUDDIN AJMAL:

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

- (a) whether there is shortage of cancer specialists and diagnostic/treatment facilities for effective management of cancer cases in the country;
- (b) if so, the schemes/programmes being implemented by the Government for the prevention of cancer, State/UTs wise; and
- (c) whether cancer survival rate in India is among the lowest in the world and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

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

(a) & (b): Cancer is being diagnosed and treated at various levels in the Government health care system. While doctors with D. M. (Medical Oncology), M.Ch (Surgical Oncology) and M.D. (Radiation Oncology) treat Cancer patients in higher level tertiary care hospitals, Cancer is also being treated in hospitals by other Doctors such as General Surgeons, Gynecologists, ENT Surgeons etc., depending on the type and site of Cancer.

To increase the number of seats in Super speciality course in Medical Oncology, Surgical Oncology, Anesthesiology and broad speciality course in Radiotherapy, the ratio of number of Post-Graduate (PG) teachers to the number of students to be admitted has been now increased to 1:3 for a Professor subject to a maximum of 6 PG seats per unit per academic year. Further the ratio of teachers to students has been revised from 1:1 to 1:2 for all MD/MS disciplines. DNB qualification has been recognized for appointment as faculty to take care of shortage of faculty.

To support the States/UTs for interventions upto district level, the Government of India is implementing National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS) under National Health Mission (NHM). The focus under the programme is on three common cancers (oral, breast and cervical).

In addition, population based prevention, control, screening and management for hypertension, diabetes and common cancers (oral, breast and cervical) is also being implemented in more than 200 districts under NHM.

The Government of India is implementing “Strengthening of Tertiary Care Cancer facilities” Scheme under NPCDCS to assist to establish/set up State Cancer Institutes (SCI) and Tertiary Care Cancer Centres (TCCC) in different parts of the country. Oncology in its various aspects has focus in case of new AIIMS and many upgraded institutions under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojna (PMSSY). Setting up of National Cancer Institute at Jhajjar (Haryana) and 2nd campus of Chittranjan National Cancer Institute, Kolkata has also been approved. All these will enhance the capacity for prevention and treatment of cancer in the country.

A National Multisectoral Action Plan has been developed in consultation with 39 Departments of Union Government. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has launched Eat Right India movement to promote healthy diet. Print, electronic and social media are used to promote healthy living and to generate awareness on risk factors of NCDs.

Tobacco control is regulated through Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Acts (COTPA) and National Tobacco Control Programme is being implemented under National Health Mission (NHM).

(c): The cancer survival rate is generally believed to depend upon amongst others, stage at diagnosis, stage of initiation of treatment, type and site of cancer, correct and complete treatment. Cancer can be diagnosed and treated at various levels in the Health care system.

According to an article “Global surveillance of trends in cancer survival 2000-14 (CONCORD-3): published in LANCET, there are differences in survival rates across countries. The study estimates 5-year survival for breast cancer as 88.2% in Canada, 68.78% in Thailand, 76.5 % in Poland and 66.1% in India.

However, the coverage of population in the study is reported to vary from higher coverage in European Countries while it is reported to cover about 0.1 % of population in India. The study has indicated various reasons for variations in survival rate of cancer. The study also impress upon the need of Population Based Cancer Registries (PBCRs) to evaluate both the impact of cancer prevention strategies and the effectiveness of health systems for all patients diagnosed with cancer.