

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1385
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.02.2023

DEPRESSION AMONG PREGNANT WOMEN

1385. DR. BHARATIBEN DHIRUBHAI SHIYAL

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is fact that depression is on the rise among pregnant women;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has got the reasons probed in this regard;
- (c) if so, the details thereof along with the corrective steps being taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (d) whether the Government will launch any special campaign to prevent depression among pregnant women and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (d): Public health and hospitals are State Subject. However, Government of India has issues various guidelines to State/ UTs to prevent depression among pregnant women. As per guidelines, Antenatal care and Skilled Attendance at Birth by Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM)/ Lady Health Visitors (LHVs)/ Staff Nurses (SNs) provide social/ Psychological support to pregnant women. In post-partum period, four Post Natal Care (PNC) visits are conducted by ANM for ascertaining the well-being of baby and the mother. 1st visit is conducted within 24 hours in case of home deliveries, 2nd visit is conducted on 3rd day of the delivery, 3rd visit is conducted on 7th day and 4th visit is conducted 6 weeks after delivery. During her 2nd and 3rd visits, the ANM assesses and counsels all the post-natal women for any post-partum depression and refers to the Medical Officer for further management if required. Further, Government is implementing Home Based New Born Care (HBNC) programme, under which ASHAs conduct 7 home visits on the 1st day (within 24hrs), 3rd day, 7th day, 14th day, 21st day, 28th day and 42nd day to check the mother and new-born, for their well-being. In case of institutional delivery, RMNCHA+N Counsellor/ SN provides counselling to mother.

Further, under Supplementary Nutrition Programme of the Anganwadi Services Scheme, nutritional assistance is provided to the pregnant women and the newborn in all districts of the country including Aspirational Districts. As per the National Food Security Act, 2013 enacted by the Government, every pregnant woman and lactating mother is entitled to receive meals during pregnancy and six months after the child birth through the local Anganwadi Centre so as to meet the nutritional standards. Further, it is provided in the Act that for children below the age of six months, exclusive breast feeding shall be promoted.

In addition, 'Mission Shakti' has been launched by the Ministry for safety, security and empowerment of women. The earlier scheme of 'Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)' implemented by the Ministry since 01.01.2017 has been included as a component under 'Samarthya' sub-scheme of 'Mission Shakti', in which the maternity benefit to Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW&LM) in DBT Mode is provided during pregnancy and lactation. For the first child, Rs. 5000/- is provided and Rs.6,000/- is also provided for the second child, provided the second child is a girl child, to discourage pre-birth sex selection and promote the girl child. Moreover, in cases of miscarriage/ still birth in the first pregnancy, the beneficiary would be considered as a fresh case in 2nd pregnancy and would be eligible for maternity benefits under PMMVY. The eligible beneficiary also receives the remaining cash incentive as per approved norms towards Maternity Benefit under Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) after institutional delivery so that on an average, a woman gets ₹ 6000/-.

Furthermore, recognizing the need for psycho-social counseling to women affected by violence and in distress, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has engaged the services of National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) for providing basic and advanced training under the project named 'Stree Manoraksha' to the staff of One Stop Centers (OSCs) across the country on handling psycho-social and mental health care needs to support to such women.

The Government, through institution like the National Commission for Women (NCW), and their counterparts in States have been spreading awareness through seminars, workshops, audio-visual, print and electronic media etc. to sensitize the people about the women in distress and also about various provisions of the legislation, etc. During second wave of COVID 19 in April 2021, National Commission for Women launched a WhatsApp helpline for providing medical assistance to expectant mothers from across the country.

Recognizing the important role of Yoga, celebration of the International Day of Yoga 2021 focused on "Yoga for well-being"- how the practice of Yoga can promote the holistic health of every individual. It is in this background and zeal, the National Commission for Women (NCW) organized a virtual discussion on importance of practicing yoga in daily lives and how it positively affects women through different life cycles on 21st June, 2021.
