

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4014
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24th MARCH, 2023**

APPOINTMENT OF PHARMACISTS AS MLSP

4014. SHRI V.K. SREEKANDAN:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Government provides medicines to patients through district-level mental health and non-communicable disease control schemes and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is also true that the National Health Policy of 2017 provides for the appointment of nurses, pharmacists and ayurvedic doctors as Mid-Level Service Providers (MLSP) and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is also true that the appointment of pharmacists as MLSP has been barred and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government is reconsidering to appoint them as MLSP and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government is considering setting up commissions for pharmacists and nurses in line with the national medical commission and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
WELFARE
(DR. BHARATI PRAVIN PAWAR)**

(a) Under NHM financial support is provided to States / UTs for provision of free essential medicines in public health facilities based on the requirements posed by States/UTs in their Programme Implementation Plans (PIPs) within their overall resource envelope. Ministry has recommended facility wise Essential Drugs List (EDL) to be made available at the public healthcare facilities to ensure widespread access to essential medicines which include mental health and non-communicable disease. No of medicines recommended at various facilities are given below. However States have the flexibility to add more.

Sr. No.	Name of Facility	No. of essential Medicine
1	DH	377
2	SDH	313
3	CHC	299
4	HWC-PHC	171
5	HWC-Sub Centre	105

(b) to (e) **National health Policy, Para 11.4 -Mid-Level Service Providers:** For expansion of primary care from selective care to comprehensive care, complementary human resource strategy is the development of a cadre of mid-level care providers. This can be done through appropriate courses like a B.Sc. in community health and/or through competency-based bridge courses and short courses. These bridge courses admit graduates from different clinical and paramedical backgrounds like AYUSH doctors, B.Sc. Nurses, Pharmacists, GNM's, etc and equip them with skills to provide services at the sub-centre and other peripheral levels. Locale based selection, a special curriculum of training close to the place where they live and work, conditional licensing, enabling legal framework and a positive practice environment ensure that this new cadre is preferentially available where they are needed most, i.e. in the under-served areas.

The functions of Community Health Officer (CHO) include provision of primary health care inclusive of clinical, public health and managerial functions. Their role includes early diagnosis, management, care coordination, prevention, control and surveillance of disease conditions. This has to be achieved by providing appropriate and timely treatment and necessary social support.

Nurses and Ayurveda practitioners are serving as CHOs. They not only have an in-depth knowledge of the human body through rigorous clinical experience and training, but also a holistic understanding of public health, which is essential for them to deliver Comprehensive Primary Health Care.

A review of the outline of Bachelor of Pharmacy (B. PHARM) curriculum indicates that a significant component of Pharmacist training is related to Pharmacokinetics, pharmacy, biochemistry, pharmaceuticals, bio-technology, drug manufacturing, pharmacology labs, drug interactions etc. Except anatomy and pathophysiology, emphasis on other clinical disciplines such as- General Medicine, General Surgery, Obstetrics/Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Mental Health and Preventive and Social Medicine/Community Health are not covered in the course design. These skills are critical for performing the role of Community Health Officer. Operational guidelines of Comprehensive Primary Healthcare through Ayushman Bharat Health & Wellness Centres approved Nurses and Ayurveda practitioners for the post of Community Health Officer.

The Pharmacy Council of India and the Indian Nursing Council govern the professions of pharmacy and nursing respectively.
