

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

**LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 2
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 2ND FEBRUARY, 2024**

TELEMEDICINE FACILITIES IN RURAL AREAS

***2. SHRIMATI RAKSHA NIKHIL KHADSE:**

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to strengthen the telemedicine facilities to resolve the quality of healthcare services in rural/remote areas, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether telemedicine facilities and quality healthcare services in rural/remote areas are limited due to geographical isolation including shortage of healthcare professionals and funds for healthcare facilities; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof including the steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(DR MANSUKH MANDAVIYA)**

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 2 FOR 2ND FEBRUARY, 2024**

(a) to (c) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) rolled out Telemedicine services as a policy intervention under the ambit of Ayushman Bharat Scheme.

In wake of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, telemedicine assumed greater importance, enabling practitioners to utilize the digital platform for health counselling and also as a mechanism to train health service providers. Further, in order to augment the potential of eSanjeevani Platform, **eSanjeevaniOPD** was launched in April 2020, to **facilitate online health services to the patients** in the confines of their home, **free of cost to ensure continuum of care.**

As on 30th January, 2024, a total of 20,41,36,598 teleconsultations have been completed. This facility is currently serving around 4,00,000 patients per day. eSanjeevani (Telemedicine) service is operational in more than 1,35,759 Ayushman Aarogya Mandirs and in more than 18,934 hubs located in all States/UTs. More than 2,02,000 doctors/paramedics are on boarded and trained under eSanjeevani initiative ever since its inception in 2019.

With an aim to support effective implementation of the digital health initiatives including telemedicine services across the country, MoHFW provides financial assistance to all States/UTs under National Health Mission for strengthening of health IT infrastructure, capacity building of human resources and for boosting intranet/internet connectivity. Under Emergency COVID Response Plans (ECRP-II), this ministry has provided financial assistance to all States/UTs for establishment of specialised hub in each district and for strengthening IT infrastructure for effective implementation of telemedicine services across the country. Further, under ECRP-II, the ministry provided financial support to CDAC Mohali for augmentation of eSanjeevani and to enhance the daily call handling capacity of eSanjeevani from 2,50,000 to 5,00,000 consultations.

The ministry has taken various initiatives to create awareness among the masses in rural and remote areas in collaboration with States/UTs. **IEC (Information, Education & communication) activities include use of short videos, brochures, pamphlets etc. in local languages to disseminate information about telemedicine services** through social media platforms. eSanjeevani telemedicine services are currently available in 13 languages (Hindi, Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Marathi, Gujarati, Assamese, Odia, Bengali, Punjabi, Urdu, and English). These strategic initiatives aim to strengthen the overall healthcare delivery system, ensuring sustained improvement in healthcare outcomes for the rural and remote populace across India.
