

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2282
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23RD SEPTEMBER, 2020**

NEGLECT OF OTHER HEALTH ISSUES DUE TO COVID-19

2282. SHRI KARTI P. CHIDAMBARAM:

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

- (a) the details of the impact of COVID-19 on reporting of TB cases and detection of HIV cases;
- (b) whether the Government anticipates an increase in the incidence of TB and HIV as a result of the pandemic; and
- (c) if so, details of the measures being taken by the government to redress the situation?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)**

(a) & (c): TB Notification from Jan 2020 to Aug 2020 is 11, 76,164. TB Notification from the same time period in the previous year i.e. Jan 2019 to Aug 2019 was 16, 49,310. Currently there is no evidence to suggest an increase in the incidence of TB cases as a result of the pandemic. However, steps taken by National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) to mitigate COVID-19 pandemic impact on TB Services. The Government has taken the following measures to ensure affordable and accessible treatment to TB patients:

- i. Issuing multiple advisories to ensure uninterrupted services during COVID-19
- ii. Guidance on ensuring functionality of TB diagnostic labs
- iii. Provision of free TB drugs of extended duration and door-step delivery
- iv. Guidance for Bi-directional TB-COVID screening and screening of TB among ILI/SARI cases issued to State/UTs

Under the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) of the Government, decline has been noticed in the number of individuals attending HIV Counselling and Testing/Screening

Centers during the COVID-19. This is due to lack of transport services and reduced mobility thereof. During March-July 2020, around 1.40 crore HIV testing has been reported under NACP facilities in comparison to 2.32 crore testing in March-July' 2019. As a result of decrease in testing/screening, detection of new HIV cases has also reduced. During period of March-July' 2020, there has been around 41.40 thousand HIV positive results at NACP facilities, down from 82.20 thousand HIV positive results in corresponding months of 2019.

As of now, the current evidence does not anticipate an increase in HIV incidence as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the uptake of HIV/AIDS services, NACP has issued guidance notes to all State/Union Territories AIDS Control Societies (SACS) to facilitate continuity of HIV prevention, testing and treatment services as much as possible through differentiated modalities like multi-month dispensation of Anti-retroviral treatment (ART), community based screening for HIV and decentralized options for management including enabling directives for commodities transportation. Several virtual meetings have been convened with all stakeholders including community representatives and civil societies to regularly review and reiterate these instructions.