

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 788  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23<sup>RD</sup> JULY, 2021**

**DETERIORATING MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS**

**788. SHRI SHRINIWAS PATIL:**

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware about deteriorating mental health conditions and increase in number of suicides due to COVID pandemic;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to combat this issue?

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

(a) to (c): The Government has not conducted any study to assess the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on mental health of the population or increase in number of suicides. However, realizing the impact that COVID-19 may have on the mental health of the people, the Government has taken a number of initiatives to provide psychosocial support. These initiatives include:

- (i) Setting up of a 24/7 helpline to provide psychosocial support, by mental health professionals, to the entire affected population, divided into different target groups viz children, adult, elderly, women and healthcare workers.
- (ii) Issuance of guidelines/ advisories on management of mental health issues, catering to different segments of the society.
- (iii) Advocacy through various media platforms in the form of creative and audio-visual materials on managing stress and anxiety, and promoting an environment of support and care for all.
- (iv) Issuance of detailed guidelines by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru- "Mental Health in the times of COVID-19 Pandemic - Guidance for General Medical and Specialized Mental Health Care Settings".
- (v) All the guidelines, advisories and advocacy material can be accessed on Ministry of Health and Family Welfare website under "Behavioural Health – Psychosocial helpline" (<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/>).

- (vi) Online capacity building of health workers by NIMHANS in providing psychosocial support and training through (iGOT)-Diksha platform.

Further, to address the burden of mental disorders, the Government of India is implementing the National Mental Health Programme (NMHP). The Government is supporting implementation of the District Mental Health Programme (DMHP) under NMHP in 692 districts of the country with the objectives to:

- (i) Provide suicide prevention services, work place stress management, life skills training and counselling.
- (ii) Provide mental health services including prevention, promotion and long-term continuing care at different levels of district healthcare delivery system.
- (iii) Augment institutional capacity in terms of infrastructure, equipment and human resource for mental healthcare.
- (iv) Promote community awareness and participation in the delivery of mental healthcare services.