

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED Q. No. 982  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03<sup>rd</sup> DECEMBER 2021**

**PREPARATION FOR FUTURE WAVES OF COVID-19**

**982. SHRI K. MURALEEDHARAN  
Dr. A. CHALLAKUMAR:  
SHRI MAHESH SAHOO:  
MS. S. JOTHIMANI:**

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

- a) the details of steps taken by the Government to ensure that the Indian Health care system is equipped to handle future waves of COVID-10 and /or other epidemics.
- b) whether the Government has recommended any Standard operating procedure (SOP) for the States/UTs to manage and respond to health emergencies, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefore;
- c) whether the Government has recommended any SOP for State / UTs to lift COVID-19 restrictions, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefore;
- d) whether Government has adequate healthcare staff to cater to COVID patients in case of resurgence of COVID pandemic, if so, the details thereof and if not, the steps taken in this regard to increase the healthcare force, State/UT-wise particularly Odisha; and
- e) the initiative taken by the Government to counter COVID-19 in far flung rural areas?

**Answer  
MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE  
(DR. BHARTI PRAVIN KUMAR)**

**(a) to (e)**

Government of India is supporting States in their endeavor to manage COVID-19 since the beginning of pandemic. Requisite support is being provided to States/UTs to enhance preparedness and response capacities against COVID-19 and other public health emergencies. Various initiatives have been undertaken by the Government to provide technical guidance and further strengthen health infrastructure, availability of essential logistics including drugs and medical oxygen supply to manage COVID-19.

A few of the interventions are as below:

- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare continues to provide technical guidance for managing various aspects of COVID-19. So far more than 150 guidelines/advisories/SoPs/plans have been provided to States/UTs.
- Guidelines on Clinical management of COVID-19 continues to be updated with emerging scientific evidence. The treatment protocol for adults was last updated on 24.05.2021 and has been widely circulated.
- Guidelines for management of COVID-19 in children was issued on 18th June 2021. The guideline covers guidance on management of acute presentation of COVID-19 as well as Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (MIS-C) in children and adolescents found temporally related to COVID-19.
- Guidelines and checklists on prevention and clinical management of Mucormycosis was disseminated to all States/UTs.
- A Comprehensive Guidelines for Management of Post-Covid Sequelae was issued by MoHFW on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021 after expert consultations to guide doctors on post-COVID-19 complications and their management.
- To further provide on-field assistance to the States/UTs, a total of 170 Central multi-disciplinary team comprising of epidemiologists, clinicians, microbiologists and senior officials from the Ministry have been deployed to 33 States/Districts reporting increased trajectory of cases.
- States are supported in terms of supply of logistics which includes PPE Kits, N-95 masks, ventilators and drugs like Hydroxychloroquine, Remdesivir etc.
- States have been supported with supply of oxygen cylinders and oxygen concentrators. States are also being supported in terms of installation of Oxygen concentrator plants/ PSA (Pressure Swing Adsorption plants) plants. All the States have been advised rational use of oxygen and to prohibit the wasteful usage by strict monitoring. States have also been advised to undertake oxygen consumption audit in hospitals including private hospitals and to undertake facility-wise/hospital-wise oxygen inventory mapping and advance planning for timely replenishment so that there is no stock out.
- COVID-19 vaccine is made available free of cost for all citizens of the country aged 18 years and above, irrespective of their socio-economic status, at all Government COVID-19 Vaccination Centres (CVCs). Provisions have been made to improve access for elderly, specially-abled citizens, vaccination of persons in Mental Health Institutions, destitute & vagabonds etc. Under the 'Har Ghar Dastak' campaign for improving COVID-19 vaccination rate, various initiatives including community awareness campaigning in collaboration with local religious and community leaders, CSOs, NGOs, NSS, NYK etc. is being taken to ensure mobilisation and counselling of the eligible population.

Funding support is also being provided to States/UTs through various avenues:

- During the F.Y. 2019-20. funds to the tune of Rs.1113.21 crore was released to the States/UTs under NHM towards management and containment of COVID-19 pandemic.
- Since September 2020, the Union Government has allowed use of State Disaster Response Funds (SDRF) for various COVID-19 related activities.

- During the FY 2020-21, funds to the tune of Rs. 8257.88 crore has been released to the States/UTs towards the India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Package. This provided support to States for health infrastructure strengthening, expansion of laboratory network, surveillance and contact tracing, procurement of PPEs, N-95 masks, ventilators etc.
- In addition, 'India COVID-19 Emergency Response & Health System Preparedness Package: Phase-II' has also been approved by the Cabinet with Rs 23,123 crores (with Rs. 15,000 Cr as Central Component & Rs 8,123 Cr as State component) and is being implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021. This includes support to State/UT level for ramping up health infrastructure including those in rural, tribal and peri-urban areas closer to the community, providing support for procurement of drugs and diagnostics to enhance service delivery at district and sub district levels for management of COVID-19 cases (including pediatric care) and for maintaining a buffer of drugs, support for IT Interventions such as implementation of Hospital Management Information System (HMIS) and expanding access to tele-consultations in all districts, and support for capacity building and training for all aspects of management of COVID-19.
- Further, PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM) with an outlay of Rs. 64,180 crores over 6 years envisages increased investments in public health and other health reforms to safeguard against future resurgences of COVID-19, if any, and future public health emergencies by:
  - Strengthening of Health and Wellness Centers in villages and cities for early detection of diseases
  - Addition of new critical care-related beds at district level hospitals.
  - Operationalization of Regional National Centers for Disease Control (NCDC).
  - Establishment of metropolitan units in urban areas and BSL-III labs across the country to strengthen the laboratory network.
  - Strengthening of existing Viral Diagnostic and Research Labs (VRDLs) and creation of new National institutes of Virology (NIVs) and a National Institute for One Health through ICMR.
  - Strengthening of Public Health Units at international Points of Entry (PoEs)

For preparedness and response against health emergencies, the National Disaster Management Authority in 2008 has issued detailed guidance on management of biological disasters (available at [https://ndma.gov.in/sites/default/files/PDF/Guidelines/biological\\_disasters.pdf](https://ndma.gov.in/sites/default/files/PDF/Guidelines/biological_disasters.pdf)). Further, National Disaster Management Authority has also issued and widely circulated National Disaster Management Plan 2019 which provides an all-hazard plan with clarification on roles and responsibilities for preparedness and response activities against biological emergencies. The Ministry of Health & FW has also finalized and circulated Model Crisis Management Plans for biological disasters in 2017 and again in 2019 to serve as template for preparation of their own respective crisis management plans.

Ministry of Health & FW vide letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 has circulated to all States/UTs guiding principles for imposition of restrictions or allowing relaxation in context of COVID-

19 based on COVID-19 testing confirmation rates and hospital bed occupancy rates. This has been reiterated by Ministry of Home Affairs under Disaster Management Act, 2005 vide order dated 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

To build the capacities of human resources including the medical manpower who help managing patients in hospitals; as well as non-medical personnel, front-line workers, who may be involved in non-medical duties such as logistics, surveillance etc., for COVID-19 management in the country including Odisha, an ‘Advisory for Human Resource Management of COVID-19’ has been prepared providing guidance to States/UTs on the human resources that can be mobilized for COVID-19 management along with possible role assignments and their training requirements.

Training Modules have also been made available on iGOT online platform by DOPT (<https://igot.gov.in/igot>) where pre-curated content can be accessed on all devices- smart phones, tablets, laptops, PCs - by multiple learners simultaneously at the time and place of their choice. The training modules have been translated to regional language.

With a view to increase the availability of trained human resources to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic situation, Ministry of Health & FW on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2021 has issued an advisory for Augmenting Human resources for COVID – 19. As per the advisory, the States have been advised to explore avenues for utilization of services of Medical Interns in Covid Management duties under the supervision of their faculty, also Final Year MBBS students can be utilized for providing services like tele-consultation and monitoring of mild Covid cases after due orientation by and supervision of Faculty. States have also been advised that the services of Final Year PG Students (broad as well as super-specialities) as residents may continue to be utilized until fresh batches of PG Students have joined. Likewise, the services of the senior residents / registrars may continue to be utilized until new recruitments are made. B.Sc./GNM Qualified Nurses may be utilized in full-time Covid nursing duties in ICU, etc., under the supervision of Senior Doctors and Nurses. Final Year GNM or B.Sc. (Nursing) students awaiting Final Exam may be given full time Covid Nursing duties at Government/Private facilities under the supervision of Senior Faculty. The services of Allied Health Care professionals may be utilized for assistance in Covid Management, based on their training and certification.

Further, under National Health Mission (NHM), Government of India provides financial and technical support to States / UTs to strengthen their healthcare systems including support for recruitment of doctors and other health human resources on contractual basis. Under NHM, support is also provided to States / UTS for hard area allowance to specialist doctors for serving in rural and remote areas

Taking note of spread of the disease to peri-urban, rural and tribal areas in many Districts, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on 16th May 2021 has issued an “SoP on Covid-19 Containment and Management in Peri-Urban, Rural and Tribal Areas”. The SOP provides for strengthening primary level healthcare infrastructure at all levels to intensify COVID-19

response in peri-urban, rural & tribal areas, while continuing to provide other essential health services through inter-sectoral approach by involving community-based organizations, Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committees (VHSNCs), Pachayati Raj institutions, Urban Local bodies, etc.