

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1613
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 11th FEBRUARY, 2022**

MEDICAL DEBTS DUE TO COVID-19

1613. SHRI SISIR KUMAR ADHIKARI:

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

- a) whether the Government has assessed the magnitude of medical debts accrued to people due to COVID-19;
- b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- c) whether Government intends to implement policy measures to address rising medical debt of persons affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, including that of persons who survived;
- d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- e) the details of measures being implemented to reduce out-of-pocket medical expenditure of the citizens?

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

(a) to (e) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare provides the technical and financial support to the States/UTs to strengthen their public healthcare system based on the requirements posed by them in their Programme Implementation Plans (PIPs) within their overall resource envelope.

Various initiatives taken up by the Government to provide technical guidance and further strengthen health infrastructure, availability of essential logistics including drugs and medical oxygen to manage COVID-19. States are supported in terms of supply of logistics which includes PPE Kits, N-95 masks, oxygen cylinders, oxygen concentrators, ventilators and drugs etc. States are also supported in terms of installation of Oxygen concentrator plants/ Pressure Swing Absorption (PSA) plants under Emergency Response & Health System Preparedness Package-I (ECRP-I).

Under ECRP-II, support is provided to the States/UTs for provision of RT-PCR machine, Biosafety cabinet and Refrigerator centrifuge etc. for Lab strengthening for RT-PCR; Portable EEG, ECG, Ultrasound & X-Ray, Blood Gas Machine, Ventilator Invasive, High Flow Nasal Cannula, Defibrillator/ Cardioverter, Pediatric Laryngoscope (Curved & Straight Blades), Incubator, Multi-para Monitor etc for oxygen supported beds, ICU beds, HDU beds including for paediatric beds and Centres of Excellence in all the districts of the country in public healthcare facilities including central government hospitals. Further support for Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO tank) plant with Medical Gas Pipeline System (MGPS) and audiovisual teleconsultation equipments is also provided to them.

Funding support is also provided to States/ UTs through National Health Mission, State Disaster Response Funds (SDRF).

For reducing the Out of Pocket Expenditure (OOPE) of the citizens, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare under National Health Mission has taken following initiatives:

- Under Free Drugs Service Initiative, provision is made to provide free essential medicines in public health facilities based on the requirements posted by them in their Programme Implementation Plans (PIPs) within their overall resource envelope.
- Similarly, Under Free Diagnostic Services, support is provided to States / UTs for provision of medical equipments to enable access and use of high-quality diagnostic services including Hub and Spoke Model and Public Private Partnerships.
- Free provision of various services for maternal health, child health, family planning, the universal immunization program, and major diseases such as tuberculosis, vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, and kala-azar, HIV/AIDS, leprosy, and so on has been strengthened. Other major initiatives for which states are supported include Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK), Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK), Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK), strengthening primary healthcare and District Hospitals etc.

- Other initiative such as Mobile Medical Units (MMUs), PM National Dialysis Programme and Tele-consultation services are also implemented.
- Under Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), health coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year to around 10.74 crore poor and vulnerable families in the country as per Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC).

OOPE has reduced from 64.2 percent in 2013-14 to 48.8 percent in 2017-18.