

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1073  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22<sup>ND</sup> JULY, 2022**

**MENTAL HEALTH IN MARGINALISED CHILDREN**

**1073. SHRI GAURAV GOGOI:**

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

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any study of mental health in marginalised children after the pandemic;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government is aware of interdependent reports stating aggravated mental illness in marginalised children;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the details of the progress under various programs to promote mental well-being in children, especially in marginalised children?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) to (d): Realizing the impact that COVID-19 may have on the mental health of the people, including children, the Government has taken a number of initiatives to provide psychosocial support during COVID-19. 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.

(e): For providing affordable and accessible mental healthcare facilities to the population, including the poor and underprivileged, the Government is implementing National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) in the country. The District Mental Health Programme (DMHP) component of the NMHP has been sanctioned for implementation in 704 districts for which support is provided to States/UTs through the National Health Mission. Facilities made available under DMHP at the Community Health Centre(CHC) and Primary Health Centre(PHC) levels, include outpatient services, assessment, counselling/ psycho-social interventions, continuing care and support to persons with severe mental disorders, drugs, outreach services, ambulance services etc. In addition to above services there is a provision of 10 bedded in-patient facility at the District level.

To generate awareness among masses about mental illnesses, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities are an integral part of the NMHP. At District level, sufficient funds are provided to each District under the DMHP for IEC and awareness generation activities in the community, schools, workplaces, with community involvement. Under DMHP various IEC activities such as awareness messages in local newspapers and radio, street plays, wall paintings etc. are taken by the States/ UTs. Further, funds are provided to each district supported under DMHP for targeted interventions with the following objectives:

- (i) To provide class teachers with facilitative skill to promote life skill among their students.
- (ii) To provide the class teachers with knowledge and skills to identify emotional conduct, scholastic and substance use problems in their students.
- (iii) To provide class teachers with a system of referral for students with psychological problems to the District Mental Health Team for inputs and treatment.
- (iv) To involve other stakeholders like parents, community leaders to enhance development of adolescents etc.

Besides the above, the Government has announced a “National Tele Mental Health Programme” in the Budget of 2022-23, to further improve access to quality mental health counselling and care services in the country.

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