

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4215  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.12.2024**

**SHORTAGE OF MEDICINES**

**4215. SHRI ESWARASAMY K:**

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

- (a) whether many health centres both primary and secondary in several States have faced severe shortage of medicines;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the existing stocks of medicines have either expired or are outdated and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure that medicines supplied to the health centres are fresh and adequate?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY  
WELFARE  
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) to (d): Under Free Drugs Service Initiative (FDSI), Government of India supports procurement of drugs and strengthening robust systems of procurement, Quality Assurance, Supply chain management and warehousing, Prescription audit, grievance redressal, dissemination of Standard Treatment Guidelines and Establishment of IT enabled platform DVDMS (Drugs & Vaccine Distribution Management System) for monitoring the real status of procurement and availability of essential medicines.

Ministry of Health and Welfare (MoHFW) has recommended facility wise Essential Medicines List (EML) to be made available at the public healthcare facilities which includes provision of a variety of free services related to maternal health, child health, adolescent health, family planning, universal immunisation programme, and for major diseases such as Tuberculosis, HIV/ AIDS, vector borne diseases like Malaria, Dengue and Kala Azar, Leprosy etc. The facility wise number of medicines in the EML includes 106 drugs at Sub Health Centre level, 172 at Primary Health Centre level, 300 at Community Health Centre level, 318 at Sub-district Hospital level and 381 drugs at district Hospital level. However, States have the flexibility to add more medicines.

The alert mechanism to monitor expiry dates of medicines involves robust tracking systems i.e. Batch Tracking, Inventory Management Systems and Barcode/RFID Technology.

States/UTs monitor expiry dates at the district and local levels, ensuring no expired products are distributed. In cases where products are approaching their expiry date, they are often redistributed to areas where they can be used before expiry.

Quality of drugs procured, under FDSI, is ensured through the operational guidelines of the initiative that

- i. All drugs must be sourced from Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) compliant manufacturers through robust procurement mechanism.
- ii. Post supply testing of every batch before distributing to the health facilities.

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