

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4217
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20TH DECEMBER, 2024**

BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER DEATHS

4217. SMT. HARSIMRAT KAUR BADAL:

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

- (a) whether it is true that there is 26 per cent rise in breast and cervical cancer deaths in the State of Punjab claiming 31,879 women from 2014-2023 due to Government negligence;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken any steps to address the high cost and low awareness around HPV vaccines in the country;
- (d) if so, the measures implemented by the Government to make the vaccine more accessible to the women in the said State and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the specific strategies implemented by the Government to improve early cancer detection and reduce mortality rates among women in Punjab?

ANSWER

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

(a) and (b): As per the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) - National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP) data, the estimated mortality due to breast and cervical cancer cases in Punjab during the years (2014-2023) are given as under:

Estimated mortality of cancer cases in Punjab during years 2014 to 2023											
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Estimated mortality due to Breast Cancer	1972	2024	2079	2133	2189	2246	2303	2361	2421	2480	22,208
Estimated mortality due to Cervical Cancer	857	880	904	924	953	978	1003	1029	1056	1082	9,671

(c) and (d): “CERVAVAC” is India’s first indigenously developed vaccine for the prevention of cervical cancer. Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine is not a part of the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP).

Government of Punjab has done pilot of HPV vaccination in Bhatinda and Mansa districts. Cervical cancer screening project was also launched in a collaborative effort by preventing deaths from cervical cancer by catalyzing the use of optimal screening tests and treatment devices. All district hospitals are equipped with Thermal Ablation Device for early treatment of cervical cancer.

(e) : The Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, provides technical and financial support to the States and Union Territories including Punjab under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD) as part of National Health Mission (NHM). The programme focusses on strengthening infrastructure, human resource development, early diagnosis, referral to an appropriate level of healthcare facility for treatment and management and health promotion and awareness generation for prevention, of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) including breast and cervical cancer.

A population-based initiative for screening, management and prevention of common NCDs including breast and cervical cancer have been rolled out as a part of comprehensive Primary Health Care in the country under National Health Mission (NHM). Screening of these common NCDs is an integral part of service delivery. As per the National NCD Portal, as of 16th December 2024, in Punjab a total of 4,03,165 females aged 30 years and above have been screened for cervical cancer and 10,25,587 for breast cancer.

In the community, Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) plays a pivotal role in spreading awareness about NCDs including breast and cervical cancer. ASHAs educate individuals and families on the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles, including nutritious diets, regular physical activity, and avoidance of tobacco and alcohol. ASHAs emphasize the significance of early detection through regular health check-ups and screenings, enabling timely intervention through home visits, group meetings, and participation in health campaigns.

Further, initiatives for increasing public awareness about NCDs and for promotion of healthy lifestyle include observance of health days related to NCDs including cancer, use of electronic and social media for continued community awareness. Financial support under National Health

Mission (NHM) for awareness generation activities for NCDs is provided to States/Union Territories as per their Programme Implementation Plans (PIPs).

The State Government of Punjab has informed that it has undertaken mass awareness campaign for early signs and symptoms of common cancers among general population and in rural regions across the State of Punjab. There are screening camps at all public health facilities across the State. The National cancer awareness day is observed every year in all 23 districts at all health facilities. Other initiatives for mass awareness include Cycle rallies, FM radio messages and Short Message Service (SMS). The cervical cancer elimination day was observed by the Government of Punjab on 17th November, 2024 and screening activities were conducted at all District hospitals. Further, poster making activities with prize distribution for school girls, printing and distribution of various Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material like Pamphlets, Posters for creating awareness for early screening of common cancers were done.
