

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4783
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28TH MARCH, 2025**

FREE MEDICAL FACILITIES UNDER AYUSHMAN BHARAT SCHEME

†4783. DR. LATA WANKHEDE:

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

- (a) the details of the significant achievements made by the Government to provide free medical facilities to the poor and low-income citizens under the Ayushman Bharat scheme so far;
- (b) the number of people benefited under this scheme so far along with the future plans to make it more effective;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to establish new medical colleges and health centres to strengthen health services in rural and urban areas so far; and
- (d) whether there is any specific plan for expanding health facilities in new areas, if so, the details thereof?

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

(a) and (b): Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) is a flagship scheme of the Government which provides health cover of Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization to approximately 55 crore beneficiaries corresponding to 12.37 crore families constituting economically vulnerable bottom 40% of India's population. In March 2024, the eligibility criteria under the scheme were expanded to include 37 lakh Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs), Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs) and their families. Recently, the scheme has been expanded to cover 6 crore senior citizens of age 70 years and above belonging to 4.5 crore families irrespective of their socio-economic status through Ayushman Vay Vandana cards. As on 26.03.2025, except for West Bengal, all States/UTs across the nation have onboarded AB-PMJAY.

As on 01.03.2025, more than 36.75 crore Ayushman cards have been created under the scheme. Further, over 8.9 crore hospital admissions worth over Rs. 1.26 lakh crore have been authorized under the scheme.

Further, regular updation such as expansion of beneficiary base, inclusion of new procedures, empanelment of new hospitals and other improvements are done in the scheme as per requirements from time to time.

(c) and (d): Ministry of Health & Family Welfare administers a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for 'Establishment of new medical colleges attached with existing district/referral hospitals' with preference to underserved areas and aspirational districts, where there is no existing Government or private medical college. The fund sharing mechanism between the Centre and State Governments is in the ratio of 90:10 for North Eastern and Special Category States, and 60:40 for others. Under the scheme, all the envisaged 157 Government medical colleges have already been approved, of which 131 medical colleges are functional.

Under National Health Mission (NHM), the Government has taken many steps towards universal health coverage by supporting the State Governments in providing accessible & affordable healthcare to people. NHM provides support for improvement in health infrastructure, availability of adequate human resources in health facilities, to improve availability and accessibility to quality health care especially for the underserved and marginalized groups in rural areas.

Under NHM, financial and technical support is provided to all the State Governments, based on the requirements posted by them in their Programme Implementation Plans (PIPs) and within their overall resource envelope.

In February 2018, the Government of India announced establishment of 1,50,000 Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs) [now renamed as Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAMs)] across the country by December 2022. The existing Sub-Health Centres (SHC), Primary Health Centres (PHC) and Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHC) are transformed into AAMs to deliver Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC) that includes preventive, promotive, curative, palliative and rehabilitative services, which are universal, free and closer to the community. As updated by the States/UTs in AAM portal, a total of 1,76,573 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs have been established and operationalized till 28.02.2025.

With the aim of ensuring and enhancing the quality of healthcare services, National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) have been launched for all health facilities including Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and Community Health Centres (CHCs). Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) has been laid down by the Government of India, which also aims towards an effort to improve the standard and quality of services and provide a uniform benchmark to assess the functionality of public health facilities. These standards include norms for services, infrastructure, human resources, diagnostics, equipment, medicines, etc.
