

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

**RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1209  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2<sup>ND</sup> JULY, 2019**

**PROVIDING WHOLLY CORRECT TREATMENT TO CANCER PATIENTS**

**1209. SHRI SANJAY SINGH:**

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of a recent research study which states that India will need 7300 cancer doctors by 2040;
- (b) whether Government is also aware that the 83 per cent of patients do not receive wholly correct cancer treatment, with 15 per cent getting wholly incorrect cancer treatment; and
- (c) if so, how does Government plan to fill up the prevailing gaps and anomalies in the medical system in India?

**ANSWER  
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND  
FAMILY WELFARE  
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)**

(a) to (c): A study published in Lancet Oncology in May, 2019 suggested that India will need 7352 cancer physicians by 2040.

A study by onco.com, a private organisation which provides online second opinion services, conducted over 6 months and with just 365 patients with cancer who sought a second opinion, has claimed that only 17% of patients were receiving correct treatment based on international treatment guidelines and concluded that Indian patients do not have access to multi-disciplinary tumour boards. These claims cannot be substantiated as the study has several pitfalls including lack of clearly stated methodology, inclusion of new or relapsed cases and use of international guidelines as comparator which are not appropriate in the Indian context. This study was also not published in any scientific and peer-reviewed journal.

Cancer is being diagnosed and treated at various levels in the Government health care system. While doctors with D. M. (Medical Oncology), M.Ch (Surgical Oncology) and M.D. (Radiation Oncology) treat cancer patients in higher level tertiary care hospitals, cancer is also being treated in hospitals by other Doctors such as General Surgeons, Gynecologists, ENT Surgeons etc., depending on the type and site of cancer.

To increase the number of seats in super speciality courses in Medical Oncology, Surgical Oncology, Anesthesiology and broad speciality course in Radiotherapy, the ratio of number of Post-Graduate (PG) teachers to the number of students to be admitted has been now increased to 1:3 for a Professor subject to a maximum of 6 PG seats per unit per academic year. Further the ratio of teachers to students has been revised from 1:1 to 1:2 for all MD/MS disciplines. DNB qualification has been recognized for appointment as faculty to take care of shortage of faculty.

To support the States/UTs for interventions upto district level, the Government of India is implementing National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS) under National Health Mission (NHM). The focus under the programme is on three common cancers (oral, breast and cervical).

In addition, a population level initiative for prevention, control and screening for common Non-Communicable Diseases (diabetes, hypertension and cancer viz. oral, breast and cervical cancer) has been rolled out in over 215 districts of the country under NHM, as a part of comprehensive primary healthcare.

The Government of India is implementing Strengthening of Tertiary Care Cancer facilities Scheme under NPCDCS to assist to establish/set up State Cancer Institutes (SCI) and Tertiary Care Cancer Centres (TCCC) in different parts of the country. Oncology in its various aspects has focus in case of new AIIMS and many upgraded institutions under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojna (PMSSY). Setting up of National Cancer Institute at Jhajjar (Haryana) and second campus of Chittranjan National Cancer Institute, Kolkata has also been approved. All these will enhance the capacity for prevention and treatment of cancer in the country.