

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

**RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2510  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2019**

**SHORTAGE OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES**

**2510. SHRI SANJAY SINGH:**

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

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a shortage of essential medicines in certain States, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) the steps taken to fix this shortage and the details thereof?

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

(a) & (b): “Public Health and Hospitals” being a State subject, the primary responsibility of ensuring sufficient supply of essential medicines in public health facilities is that of respective State Governments.

To ensure availability of essential drugs and reduce the Out of Pocket Expenditure (OOPE) of the patients visiting the public health facilities, Government has rolled out the Free Drugs Service Initiative (FDSI) under National Health Mission (NHM).

Under this, financial support is provided to States / UTs for provision of free essential medicines in public health facilities based on the requirements posted by them in their Programme Implementation Plans (PIPs) within their overall resource envelope. This support includes for strengthening/setting up robust systems of procurement, quality assurance mechanism, warehousing, prescription audit, grievance redressal, dissemination of Standard Treatment Guidelines, and IT backed supply chain management systems like Drugs and Vaccines Distribution Management Systems (DVDMS).

All States/ UTs have reported that they have notified this policy to provide free essential medicines in public health facilities. The Ministry has also provided illustrative list of essential medicines that should be provided at Sub Centres, Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres and District Hospitals.

DVDMS is a web-based Supply Chain Management System that deals in purchase, supply, distribution and inventory management of various drugs, sutures, surgical and consumable items. It has an in-built provision of monitoring and checking the availability of medicine at all facilities at district and state level. DVDMS links various Regional/ District Drug Warehouses (DWH), District Hospitals (DHs), their sub stores like Community Health Centres (CHCs) and Primary Health Centres (PHCs). Moreover, it has the functionality for distribution of drugs to patients, thus enabling tracking of consumption till last mile.

1.5 lakh Sub Health Centres and Primary Health Centres across the country are being transformed into Health and Wellness Centres by December 2022 under Ayushman Bharat for provision of comprehensive primary care that includes preventive healthcare and health promotion at the community level with continuum of care approach.

All these Ayushman Bharat – Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs) have the provision of free distribution of medicines to the visiting patients.

On the basis of the proposals received from all States/ UTs (except, UT of Delhi), so far, approvals for over 60,000 AB-HWCs have been accorded. Out of those, as reported by the States/UTs, 25,162 AB-HWCs are functional till 06<sup>th</sup> December, 2019.