

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1551
ANSWERED ON:15.07.2009
SUPPLY OF MEDICINES FREE OF COST TO POOR
Rao Shri Sambasiva Rayapati

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

- (a) whether the Government has launched a scheme for supply of essential medicines to the poor and needy persons free of cost;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the details of medicines as well as the diseases that are proposed to be covered under the scheme?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

(a) to (c): The Government has operationalised National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) for comprehensive reforms in public health delivery system to ensure access to quality health services for poor and needy patients especially in the far flung rural areas. NRHM also envisages comprehensive improvements in procedures for procurement of medicines and other consumables and supply chain management so as to ensure that all essential medicines are available to the poor and needy in the hospitals.

The Government also provides direct financial assistance to patients who are living below poverty line and are suffering from major life threatening diseases. Under the Rastriya Arogya Nidhi, this assistance helps the patients receive medical treatment at any of the super specialty hospitals/ institutions or other government hospitals.

NRHM is a sector wide initiative and provides overarching umbrella to existing National programmes of Health and Family Welfare including Reproductive & Child Health (II), National Disease Control Programmes, Integrated disease Surveillance. NRHM envisages all round improvement in health facilities as per Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) and all essential medicines necessary for this purpose are covered.