

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3849
ANSWERED ON:27.04.2012
EXPERIMENTAL UNVERSAL HEALTHPACKAGE
Sudhakaran Shri K.

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

- (a) whether the Government plans to introduce an experimental universal health package in at least one district per State;
- (b) if so, whether as a part of NRHM this project will ensure access to free generic drugs for the ailing patients;
- (c) whether the Government of Kerala has initiated moves for procurement and distribution of drugs by the State involving low costs and the improved access to public;
- (d) whether the national sample survey data indicates that the availability of free medicines to patients fell from about 32 per cent of drugs supplied free in 1986-87 to a lowly figure of 9 per cent in 2004; and
- (e) if so, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY)

- (a): The Report of the Steering Committee on Health for the Twelfth Five Year Plan has recommended that, "Cashless and portable Universal Health Coverage (UHC) should be piloted in one district in each State and UT during the first year of the Twelfth Plan, and gradually rolled out thereafter".
- (b) No decision in this regard has been taken so far.
- (c) The Government of Kerala has informed that since 2008, Kerala Medical Services Corporation Ltd. (KMSCL) acts as the central procurement agency for all essential drugs for the healthcare institutions under the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Kerala. KMSCL procures drugs by inviting open tenders and distribute to all healthcare institutions across the State free of cost to the patients.
- (d): During the 42nd round of National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) survey held during July 1986- June 1987, the percentage of hospitalized cases where medicine were received free is 30.66, whereas, during 60th round of NSSO survey, held during January-June 2004, this data was observed to be 9.3 %.
- (e) Low investment in healthcare is one of the reasons for this and as such in April 2005, the Government has launched National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) programme in order to provide accessible, affordable and quality healthcare services in the entire country especially in the rural areas.