

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4666
ANSWERED ON:04.05.2012
AGING FEMALE POPULATION
McLeod Smt. Ingrid

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

- (a) whether Government has seen a recent World Health Organisation (WHO) report warning India that feminization of its aging population could lead to a rapid increase in its number of widows;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto; and
- (c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to provide the cover of social security to rising number of aged widows in the country?

Answer

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

(a) to (c) WHO in its global report on "Gender, Health & Ageing" in 2003 mentions that women generally have higher life expectancy than men and over the next few decades women's life expectancy in developing world including India is expected to increase faster than men's. Women's longer life spans, combined with the fact that men tend to marry women younger than themselves and that widowed men remarry more often than widowed women, mean that there are & also likely to be vastly more widows in the world.

The Government of India has launched the "National Programme for the Health Care of Elderly (NPHCE)" in 2010 to address health related problems of elderly people including elderly women / widows. The basic aim of the NPHCE is to provide separate and specialized comprehensive health care to the senior citizens at various level of State health care delivery system including outreach services.