

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6943
ANSWERED ON:18.05.2012
ANAEMIA CASES
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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large number of anaemia cases in the rural areas especially amongst pregnant women, remain undetected;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons thereto;
- (c) whether these undetected anaemia cases amongst pregnant women risk their lives as well as those of their to be born/ newly born child;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the details of the steps taken by the Government to minimize the number of undetected cases;
- (e) whether the Government have taken note of a new hand-held needle free battery device that screens anaemia and facilitates its monitoring using an innovative technology; and
- (f) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) & (b): As per National Family Health Survey (NFHS)- III (2005-06), prevalence of anaemia in women is higher in rural areas (57.4%) than in urban areas (50.9%). Prevalence of anaemia in pregnant women is not available separately for rural and urban areas. Overall, 58.7% of pregnant women in the country are anaemic. Some of these cases of anaemia may go undetected due to low levels of awareness in the women and the community and poor health seeking behaviour for accessing health services including ante-natal care (ANC).

(c) & (d): Anaemia can be a contributory factor for aggravating the risk to the women due to maternal complications during pregnancy, childbirth and in postpartum period e.g. post-partum haemorrhage (PPH), ante-partum haemorrhage (APH) etc. If left untreated, anaemia may lead to maternal death. Anaemic mothers are also at risk of delivering low birth weight babies who are prone to complications like infection which can lead to higher incidence of neonatal mortality.

The key steps taken by the Government of India under NRHM to reduce the numbers of undetected anaemia cases among pregnant women are:

Provision of services for early registration during pregnancy and quality ante-natal care services at health facilities and through outreach activities at Village Health & Nutrition Days (VHNDs).

Haemoglobin testing for detection of anaemia during ante-natal checkup visits and regular follow up by frontline workers and other service providers.

Awareness generation through Information Education Communication (IEC) / Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) activities on the significance of detection and treatment of anaemia in the women, family and community.

Introduction of Safe Motherhood booklet and Mother and Child Protection (MCP) card which are tools to enhance awareness and improve access to quality antenatal, intranatal and postnatal care services.

Training of frontline workers e.g. ASHAs, AWWs, ANMs and other service providers in early detection and follow up of cases of anaemia, counseling of pregnant women during ante-natal period on various aspects of anaemia e.g. signs and symptoms, its consequences, the significance of early detection through Haemoglobin testing and treatment.

Web-enabled Mother and Child Tracking System has been introduced which would bring more anaemic pregnant women into the institutional fold.

Facilitating pregnant women to access services at health institutions through ASHAs, AWWs and other frontline workers.

Provision of financial support to sub-centres and other health facilities through untied funds, RKS etc. which can be utilized for

procuring Haemoglobin testing equipment and reagents.

(e) & (f): No such device is being used for screening of anaemia under the National Rural Health Mission.