

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:369

ANSWERED ON:23.11.2012

PALLIATIVE CARE

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

- (a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to shortage of palliative care centres in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof indicating the number of palliative care centres in the country, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has proposed/finalised any action plan to improve access to palliative care across the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the financial modalities and operational guidelines worked out for the purpose, State/UT-wise?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (GHULAM NABIAZAD)

(a) & (b) The exact number of Palliative care centres in the country is not available. Palliative care is given to alleviate symptoms e.g. swelling, bleeding, pain etc. especially in advance stages of illnesses such as cancer. Cancer is treated with various modalities e.g. radiotherapy, surgery, chemotherapy and supportive care including feeding, control of infections, avoidance of bed sores etc. Efforts of state governments are supplemented by programmes of the Government of India such as the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases & Stroke. There are provisions for manpower, drugs and home based care etc. for various activities including palliative care under the programme during the 11th plan period in 100 districts in 21 States.

(c), (d) & (e) An Expert Group was constituted to work out strategies for palliative care in India. The expert group has submitted the recommendations outlining the strategies for palliative care in India. The suggested strategies include provision of national and state Palliative Care Cells, strengthening of Govt. Medical Colleges, Regional Cancer Centres (RCCs), and District Hospitals by augmenting human resources, providing reserved beds for palliative care in addition to outpatient facilities, improved availability of morphine as a painkiller, capacity building through training and awareness generation.

Detailed operational and financial modalities for implementation in the health care delivery system have not been worked out.