

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1886

ANSWERED ON:31.07.2015

Treatment of Epilepsy

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

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

(a) whether the Government is aware of the shortage of well-equipped healthcare facilities and trained surgeons for treatment of epilepsy which is forcing thousands of patients to live in agony and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the action taken by the Government against the neurologists unwilling to take up these time-consuming and not-so profitable procedures as a result of which only 100-200 surgeries are carried out when at least 5000 patients require surgical correction to prevent recurrent seizures; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to sensitize schools to manage paediatric epilepsy patients effectively since people with epilepsy can be targets of prejudice?

Answer

(a) & (b): It is estimated that nearly 1/4th of persons suffering from epilepsy may be suitable for epilepsy surgery after an extensive pre-surgical evaluation. This involves a dedicated team work consisting of neurologists (epileptologists), neurosurgeons (epilepsy surgeons), radiologist, neuropsychologist, psychiatrist, nurses, EEG technologists etc.

While "Health" is a State subject, the Government of India supplements the efforts of State Governments to provide health services including for treatment of epilepsy. The Government centers are regularly carrying out such extensive 'pre-surgical evaluation and epilepsy surgery' and are located in major cities like Thiruvananthapuram (Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology), New Delhi (All India Institute of Medical Sciences), Bengaluru (NIMHANS), Mumbai (King Edward Memorial Hospital) etc. There are also a few private hospitals performing such procedures in the country.

The Government has taken following steps to overcome the shortage of neurologists:-

i. Increase in the number of seats by Medical Council of India in all the centers providing training in Neurology.

ii. Establishment of six AIIMS like institutions in the country.

iii. Approval of Plan Scheme for upgrading two Central Mental Health Institutes to provide Neurology and Neurosurgery services.

iv) Upgrading State Medical Colleges across the country so that these centers can impart training and services in Neurology.

(c): The Indian Epilepsy Association (IEA) with 26 chapters across India is carrying out such activities - in the community at large and even in schools (School Epilepsy Awareness Programme). One such programme launched at Bengaluru by Indian Epilepsy Association jointly with NIMHANS is known as "Hope on Wheel Programme" which is working to create awareness, removing the stigma and thereby improve prevention, treatment, care and services for the people with epilepsy.