

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3280
ANSWERED ON:01.08.2014
CASES OF EPILEPSY
Boianapalli Shri Vinod Kumar

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

- (a) whether a number of people are suffering from epilepsy, seizure and related neurological impairments in the country and, if so, the details thereof, State/UTwise;
- (b) whether majority of such patients do not receive treatment due to associated stigma and lack of treatment facilities and awareness among the people;
- (c) if so, the details thereof along with the remedial measures being taken by the Government to address the problem;
- (d) whether the Government has any proposal to bring epilepsy and certain types of diabetes under the Disability Act and issue disability card to the patients, particularly children; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. HARSH VARDHAN)

(a): Yes. The data on people suffering from epilepsy, seizure and related neurological impairments in the country is not collected centrally. However, it is estimated that there were about 8 million people living with epilepsy in our country in the year 2013.

(b) & (c): As informed by Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoloi Regional Institute of Mental Health, Tezpur, Assam, about 50% of people living with epilepsy and related neurological impairments in the country do not receive medical treatment (Gourie Devi et al 2003). Treatment gap is found to be higher in rural settings as compared to the urban settings.

While health is a State subject, Central Government provides assistance to the State Governments for providing health services including for management and treatment of epilepsy and related neurological impairments.

Central Government Institutes like NIMHANS, AIIMS, JIPMER, Dr. RML Hospital, Safdarjung Hospital etc provide facilities for diagnosis and treatment of such diseases. These services get further strengthened by establishment of new AIIMS and assistance for upgradation of medical colleges across the country.

Indian Epilepsy Association with 26 chapters across India is carrying out activities in community and even schools regarding awareness, removing the stigma and thereby helping to improve prevention, treatment, care and services for people with epilepsy.

(d) & (e): The Government had introduced the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014 in the Rajya Sabha on 07.02.2014 wherein "chronic neurological conditions" has been included as a specified disability. The Bill provides for the Central Government to notify any other category of disability as and when so warranted and contains provisions for certification of specified disabilities.