

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4475

ANSWERED ON:12.08.2016

Viral Hepatitis Infections

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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 cases of viral hepatitis infections are on the rise in the country and if so, the details of various types of hepatitis infections reported during the last three years and the current year, type and State/UT-wise;
- (b) whether viral hepatitis is a major public health problem in the country and is hyper endemic for HAV and HEV and if so, the details thereof along with the funds allocated and utilized for its prevention and cure during the last three years, State/UTwise;
- (c) whether the Government in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) organised an event on World Hepatitis Day and if so, the details thereof along with the objectives of the programme and the achievements made thereon; and
- (d) the details of efforts taken by the Government to take rapid action to create awareness about the disease and to increase access for screening and treatment services?

**Answer**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND  
FAMILY WELFARE  
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)

(a): The current trends suggest more and more cases of viral hepatitis being reported, however it is difficult to comment on the numbers. However, whether this is due to actual increase in incidence/prevalence or due to greater awareness and better diagnostics, or both, is not known.

There is an urgent need for establishment of a laboratory network for surveillance of Viral Hepatitis, in order to have proper data.

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With that view, the Government of India has recently instituted "The National Viral Hepatitis Surveillance Programme" under the 12th five year plan (2012-17) with an estimated budget of 30 crore. The initial funds have been released to National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) in current financial year to start the surveillance activities. In the first year, 3 network Laboratories shall be established in different geographical locations of the country. Once the network is established, data regarding types of hepatitis infection would become available for States/UTs and for the country

(b): Yes, viral hepatitis is a major public health problem in the country. Status of endemicity of different kinds of viral hepatitis in India is not correctly known as of now. To address this need the National Viral Hepatitis Surveillance Programme was launched with NCDC as the co-ordinating centre. NCDC is at the initial stages of establishing a network of Laboratories under this programme, so that the correct and comprehensive data regarding status of these infections is available in future.

The funds amounting to Rs 2.62 crore have been released in this current financial year

(c): Yes, Government of India in collaboration with WHO organized a Global event on the occasion of World Hepatitis Day on 28th July 2016 in Mumbai. The main objective of this event was to increase awareness about Hepatitis among general public, health care providers and policy makers at the highest level. The programme focused on all aspects of Hepatitis like water borne hepatitis, blood borne hepatitis, injection safety and vaccination.

The event was attended by WHO, Health Ministers and Health Secretaries from many States and by the Union Minister of State Health and Family Welfare. Experts from WHO, Egypt and Thailand also participated in the event. During the event, experts stressed on the need of injection safety, safe blood and the need to increase coverage of birth dose vaccination for Hepatitis - B.

(d): NCDC has released 'Viral Hepatitis- The silent disease: Prevention, control and treatment guidelines' on 29th July 2016.

As part of routine activity under the HIV programme, awareness generation on safe injection practices and Hepatitis C is focused upon. Government of India has also recently set up a Technical Expert Group to look into injection safety issues to prevent Hepatitis C. Some States like Punjab, Haryana and Manipur are already providing Hepatitis C treatment from their State Health Budget. It is also under consideration to include Hepatitis C treatment in National Health Insurance Protection Scheme.

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