

(b) Depiction of pictorial health warnings is an evidence based tool to create awareness about the serious and adverse health consequences of tobacco usage especially among youth, children and the illiterate. The notification issued by the Government on 15.10.2014 which specifies that the pictorial health warnings shall occupy 85% of the principal display area on both sides of tobacco product packages. This is expected to warn the users about the ill-effects of Tobacco use.

Complaints against MCI

1840. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that there are large number of complaints regarding functioning of Medical Council of India (MCI) in the past and also at present;
- (b) whether Government is planning to reconstitute/abolish MCI; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (c) A Group of Experts has been constituted to study the existing Indian Medical Council (IMC) Act, 1956 and to look at the proposed amendments to the Act and also to make recommendations to the Government to make the Medical Council of India (MCI) modern and suited to the prevailing conditions.

Inadequate number of ambulances

1841. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the fact that the number of ambulances available to cater to the country's rural areas is only about half the required number of ambulances since the World Health Organisation prescribes that there should be at least one ambulance per 1,00,000 population in the plains, and one for every 70,000 population in hilly terrain or tribal areas;
- (b) whether Government is aware of the fact that absence of suitable transportation is one of the reasons for failing healthcare system even in places where basic health infrastructure exists;
- (c) whether Government proposes to make available the adequate number of ambulances; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) There is no such norm laid down by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

(b) to (d) Availability of dependable emergency patient transportation services are important for saving lives and better utilization of healthcare services. Under National Health Mission (NHM), the Union Government provides financial support to States/UTs to strengthen the health systems. This includes support for procurement and operation of basic and advanced ambulance services based on the requirement proposed by the State/UT in their annual Programme Implementation Plan (PIP). The model for implementation of the programme/particular activity is selected by respective State/UT Governments depending upon their requirement and suitability. Presently, 13171 ambulances and 5778 empanelled patient transportation vehicles are operational under NHM.

Central assistance for urban health projects

1842. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received any proposals from various State Governments including Jharkhand for additional Central assistance for Urban Health Projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the present status of the proposals;

(c) by what time the Central assistance will be released; and

(d) the quantum of amount released in this regard, particularly to Jharkhand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (d) Proposals for release of funds under the National Urban Health Mission (NUHM) have been received from different State Governments and keeping in view the available resources, funds have been approved for different States. Details of funds sought and approved, are given in the Statement (*See below*). Earlier, during 2013-14 a total amount of ₹662.227 crore had been released to 29 States/UTs out of which, ₹6.7275 crore had been released to Jharkhand.