

National Leprosy Eradication Programme

National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP), India is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the umbrella of National Health Mission (NHM). The major concern of the Programme is to detect the cases of leprosy at an early stage, and to provide complete treatment, free of cost, in order to prevent the occurrence of Grade II Disability (G2D) in the affected persons. Under NLEP, it is aimed to reduce G2D per million population to less than 1 per million population and to have zero G2D among new child cases aligned with the target given by Global Leprosy Strategy 2016-20. Several initiatives have been taken to encourage early case detection, to ensure complete treatment, and to contain the onset of disease in close contacts of the index cases (persons diagnosed with leprosy).

1. For enhanced active & early case detection, so that there remain no cases of leprosy and eventually converted into Grade II Disability:

- Introduced new Operational Guidelines 2020 “Active case Detection & Regular Surveillance” to ensure active case detection throughout the year.
- To strengthen the active screening for early case detection, on a more regular basis, convergence of leprosy screening under RashtriyaBalSwasthyaKaryakram (RBSK) and Rashtriya Kishore SwasthyaKaryakram (RKSK) for screening of children (0-18 years) has been done and the detailed screening guidelines have been issued to all the States/UTs.
- Convergence of leprosy screening under Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC), Ayushman Bharat for population based screening of women and men of age 30 years and above and Urban Leprosy Screening under NUHM for peri-urban and urban slums area/colonies’ migratory population.

2. To stop discrimination against people suffering from leprosy: Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaigns (SLAC) at village level

In addition, various services are being provided under the programme for Disability Prevention and Medical Rehabilitation (DPMR) i.e., reaction management, provision of MCR footwear,

Aids & Appliances, referral services for management of cases and reconstructive surgery at District Hospitals and Medical Colleges/Central leprosy Institution.

As a result of above mentioned activities, Prevalence rate has reduced to 0.57 (March 2020) from 0.62 (March 2019), Grade II disability per million population has reduced from 2.65 per million population (March 2019) to 1.96 per million population (March 2020), further reduced to 0.80/million as on Sept, 2020 (provisional data), and absolute number of child disability cases caused by leprosy reduced from 84 (March 2019) to 63 as on 31st March, 2020. Similarly, Grade II disability percentage reduced to 2.41 (March 2020) from 3.05 (March, 2019).