

COVID-19 Updates

Taking COVID-19 head-on with Community Participation and Digital Initiatives in Odisha

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The fight against COVID-19 is a collective war led by the Centre with active participation of the States/UTs. Many States have evolved customized strategies within the larger framework of advisories, guidelines and protocols suggested by the Centre.

Odisha has focused its anti-COVID measures on active use of IT, empowering the local sarpanches, building its skilled healthcare force through community participation, and protecting the vulnerable groups. This had led to reduced disease burden with low mortality rates. Some of the key initiatives include:

Support to co-morbid and senior citizens via Sachetak app

Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has developed a mobile App 'Sachetak', to keep co-morbid and elderly citizens of the city under high scrutiny. One family member is registered as a caregiver. For elderly people staying alone, one volunteer from Ward Level Sachetak Committee is identified as a caregiver. They are oriented in ways to ring-fence the vulnerable people. Through this App, citizens can explore resources on COVID protection, consult doctors, view updates on COVID quarantine, positive cases etc. The data from the App helps civic bodies plan for targeted healthcare camps.

Empowerment of Sarpanches for effective monitoring

The State government has delegated powers of District Collectors to Sarpanches of Gram Panchayats for their jurisdiction under Section 51 of Disaster Management Act, 2005, Epidemic Diseases Act 1897 read with Odisha COVID-19 Regulations, 2020. This is helping in efficient monitoring of the 14-day quarantine regulations, especially of the returning migrants.

Deployment of telemedicine services

A free-of-charge telemedicine helpline service (14410) has been made operational in addition to the 104 helpline. Equipped with an interactive voice response (IVR) system-based module, this provides medical advice and informs people on various COVID-19 related resources with the help of over 300 qualified medical professionals. This has helped to reduce fear and apprehension among the population.

Capacity augmentation of medical personnel

The Odisha government has trained 1.72 lakh health personnel to provide healthcare services to COVID-patients. As an innovative step, the Ganjam district administration is training thousands of migrants in quarantine centers as community health workers in areas such as sanitation measures. This practice is being replicated in other districts too.

MV/SG

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