

Union Health Secretary, Industries & Internal Trade Secretary and Secretary Pharmaceuticals engage with 29 States/UTs to ensure adequate Oxygen availability in all Healthcare Facilities

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The Union Health Ministry held a virtual meeting today where Union Health Secretary, Secretary DPIIT Secretary Pharmaceuticals and Secretary Textiles participated. State Health Secretaries and Industries Secretaries of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Kerala, Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, NCT of Delhi, Odisha, Punjab, Puducherry, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

The aim of the meeting was to ensure adequate Oxygen availability in all healthcare facilities in these States & unrestricted intra as well as inter State movement of oxygen.

It was noted that 11 tankers in the State of Assam supply Oxygen to most of the North-Eastern States. States were asked to assess the need and then to press more tankers into action, repurpose similar vehicles for carrying oxygen, take steps to reduce their turnaround time so that patients do not face any lack of oxygen.

The States were specifically advised to:-

1. Ensure facility wise/hospital wise oxygen **inventory management** and **advance planning** for timely replenishment so that there are no stockout.
2. Ensure that **no restriction** is imposed on the movement of Medical Oxygen between States/UTs.
3. Provision of “Green Corridor” for Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) Tankers within the cities.
4. **Real Time monitoring** of cryogenic tankers used to supply oxygen.
5. **Repurposing** of Argon and Nitrogen carrying tankers to increase number of oxygen carrier vehicles.
6. Hospitals and institutions have long term tender/ contract agreement for supply of Oxygen with oxygen manufacturers, which need to be honoured. Hence, States must not impose restrictions on free movement of Oxygen.
7. Ensure timely payment of the **due bills** to the manufacturers and supplier to maintain uninterrupted supply of oxygen.
8. Improve power supply infrastructure and ensure uninterrupted supply to Oxygen Manufacturing Units.
9. Improve hospital **storage capacity** and identify MSME units whose storage capacity can be used to store Oxygen.
10. Undertake **Oxygen Consumption Audit**, ensure only cases requiring medical oxygenation are administered with Oxygen and prevent leakages due to negligence of hospital staff

11. Ensure proper disinfection of Oxygen cylinders as per protocols while sending cylinders to fillers of Oxygen.
12. Effective coordination with steel plants for Oxygen procurement since steel plants provide approx. 550 MT/day oxygen in addition to oxygen manufacturers who provide 6400 MT/day.
13. Expedite process of **grant of licenses** to produce medical oxygen to those already producing industrial oxygen.

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HFV/COVID Oxygen meeting/14September2020/3

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