

States exhibiting surge in Daily New COVID cases and High Active Caseload urged to Return to Fundamentals of “Test, Track and Treat”

Accelerate Vaccination for specified population categories in worst affected districts in Mission Mode

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Shri Rajesh Bhushan, Union Health Secretary and Dr. Vinod K. Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog today interacted with Health Secretaries and MDs (NHM) of Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and UTs of Delhi and Chandigarh. These States/UTs have in the recent past seen increased positivity and increased number of daily positive cases. They reviewed the ongoing public health measures of surveillance, containment and management of COVID cases in wake of the steep rise in daily new cases of COVID and the high number of active caseload being reported from these eight States/UTs.

In a detailed presentation, it was pointed out that 9 districts in Delhi, 15 in Haryana, 10 in Andhra Pradesh, 10 in Odisha, 9 in Himachal Pradesh, 7 in Uttarakhand, 2 in Goa, 1 in Chandigarh continue to be of concern as these districts are seeing a decrease in total tests being conducted, low share of RT-PCR tests, increase in weekly positivity and low number of contact tracing of the COVID positive cases. These together can pose high risk of transmission to the neighbouring States and UTs. A granular analysis of the COVID response in the districts was shared with the States/UTs for further action.

States were specifically asked to:

- Continue with the effective strategy of ‘Test Track & Treat’ that had yielded rich dividends at the height of the pandemic.
- Improve overall testing in districts reporting reduction in testing
- Increase share of RT-PCR tests in districts dependent on high levels of antigen testing.
- Refocus on surveillance and stringent containment of those areas in selected districts which are seeing cluster of cases.
- Carry out an average close contact tracing of minimum of 20 persons per positive case.
- Focus on clinical management in districts reporting higher deaths.
- Actuate their health infrastructure to provide effective clinical management to all the patients as a surge in cases also affects the case fatality rate in those districts.
- Accelerate vaccination for priority population groups in districts reporting higher cases.
- Make optimal use of the available vaccine doses and focus on critical districts.
- To collaborate with the private hospitals to open up vaccination time-table for a minimum of 15 days and maximum of 28 days at a time.
- Promote COVID-appropriate behaviour through communication and enforcement.

Stress was laid on prompt isolation and on medical supervision of those active cases presently in home isolation for early identification of progressive deterioration of the disease. The States were also asked actively watch out for super-spreading events and share their best practices in breaking the chain of transmission.

MV/SJ

HFW/Secy VC states-8 State-UTs/6th March 2021/2

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