

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2099  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 1st AUGUST, 2025**

**FREE DRUGS AND DIAGNOSTICS SERVICE INITIATIVE UNDER NHM**

**2099. SHRI SELVAM G:**

**SHRI C N ANNADURAI:  
SHRI NAVASKANI K**

Will the **Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is implementing the Free Drugs Service Initiative and Free Diagnostics Service Initiative under the National Health Mission (NHM) across the country, if so, the details thereof, State-wise including Tamil Nadu;
- (b) the number of essential drugs and diagnostic tests mandated to be provided free of cost at different levels of public health facilities under these initiatives;
- (c) the extent to which the State of Tamil Nadu has implemented these initiatives at SubHealth Centres (SHCs), Primary Health Centres (PHCs), Community Health Centres (CHCs), Sub-District Hospitals (SDHs) and District Hospitals;
- (d) whether the Union Government has any monitoring mechanism in place to ensure uninterrupted availability of essential drugs and timely delivery of diagnostic services in public health facilities in Tamil Nadu and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps being taken by the Union Government to further reduce the Out-Of-Pocket Expenditure of patients in Tamil Nadu through enhanced coverage of free drugs and diagnostics?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY  
WELFARE  
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

- (a) to (e): Under NHM, financial support is provided to all States / UTs including Tamil Nadu for provision of free essential medicines & free essential diagnostics in public health facilities based on the requirements posed by States/UTs in their Programme Implementation Plans (PIPs) within their overall resource envelope. Under Free Drugs Service Initiative, Ministry has recommended facility wise Essential Drugs List (EDL) to be made available at the public healthcare facilities in the country including Tamil Nadu to ensure widespread access to essential medicines.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India supports 'Free Diagnostics Service Initiative' (FDSI) programme under National Health Mission. The programme was launched with the aim to provide accessible and affordable pathological and radiological diagnostics services closer to the community which in

turn reduces the Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE). The number of medicine and Diagnostics services recommended at these health facilities in the country including Tamil Nadu are given as below. However, States have the flexibility to add more.

Sr. No.	Name of Facilities	No. of essential Medicine	No. of Diagnostics
1	District Hospitals (DHs)	381	134
2	Sub-District Hospitals(SDHs)	318	111
3	Community Health Centres (CHCs)	300	97
4	Ayushman Arogya Mandir (AAM) - Primary Health Centres (PHCs)	172	63
5	AAM-Sub Health Centre (SHCs)	106	14

As informed by the State Govt. of Tamil Nadu, total 482 essential drugs are provided at PHC, CHC, SDH and DHQ level and 484 specialty drugs at DH and Tertiary level. Total 134 test at DH, 111 at SDH, 97 at CHC, 63 at PHC and 14 test at Sub-Health Centres are provided in Tamil Nadu.

The Ministry has adopted a multi-layered monitoring approach to identify and address gaps in procurement, supply chain, and stock management. Many States have adopted digital platforms like Drugs and Vaccine Distribution Management System (DVDMS) to track procurement, consumption, and replenishment of the drugs. Through Open Data Kit (ODK) tool the various parameters of health facilities are assessed by States which include availability of essential drugs as well as diagnostics. Field visits by senior officials of Union Government as well as State Government also monitor the availability and utilisation of these services.

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