



ALL INDIA BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED RETIRED EXECUTIVES' ASSOCIATION

Central Headquarters

Registered under Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 vide Govt. of NCT Delhi No. S/RS/SW/1161/2014

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No. AIBSNLREA/CHQ/2025/7

Date: 17th January 2025

To

Shri Jagan Prakash Nadda,
Minister of Health & Family Welfare,
Government of India,
New Delhi

Sub: Need to expand the list of CGHS cities – Request for relaxation of the norms

Sir,

We are constrained to seek your special attention to the need for expanding the list of CGHS cities with a fast pace in order that the retired Central Government employees have access to quality and comprehensive healthcare services without having to travel long distances.

2. You may be aware that the retired Central Government employees are not covered by Central Services (Medical Attendance) Rules. While those residing in CGHS areas are able to subscribe to CGHS and avail both outdoor and cashless in-patient medical care in government as well as empanelled private hospitals, those residing in non-CGHS area are required to be content with a monthly Fixed Medical Allowance of Rs.1000/-, which will hardly meet the expenditure towards medicines for multiple age-related ailments. In case they opt for CGHS and pay the contributions, they are required to travel long distances to other CGHS cities to avail themselves of both outdoor and indoor medical care. Even in cases of emergency admissions in private hospitals in their places of residence, reimbursement becomes a tricky and lengthy process, with the authorities refusing to reimburse and often requiring the courts to intervene.

3. While intervening on such occasions, the courts have observed that *“it cannot possibly be disputed that having good treatment, for dangerous diseases from a good hospital indeed, is a step in aid, to live with dignity, which amounts to right to life to a person, as guaranteed by the Constitution of India. If that be so, then no fetters can be placed on the rights of citizens to claim medical reimbursement, post-retirement, spent by them on their treatment. No doubt, there are some (inadequate) provisions for grant of medical reimbursement, to serving employees, but that benefit is not available to retired employees / pensioners. Perhaps, the Welfare State thinks, that the moment a person, retires, he ceases to be a citizen of India, which view, indeed cannot prudently be accepted, in any manner”*.

4. CGHS, with all its shortcomings, continues to be a boon for those living in CGHS areas. After the launch of CGHS in Delhi in the year 1954, the facility has been extended only to 79 more cities, at an average rate of just one city every year. The stringent norms of 6000 card holders for extending the facility to a new city and 2000 card holders for establishing a new wellness centre act as a hurdle for fast expansion of CGHS to new cities. The additional rider of ‘subject to availability of resources’ often found in the replies given in the Parliament on the matter is a cause for concern. The requirement of relaxing/revising the norms has figured in as many reports of the Standing Committee of Parliament over the years, but no follow up action has ever been taken.

5. In view of the above facts, we request you to kindly get the issue examined and cause relaxation of the norms for expanding CGHS to new cities and get such expansion fast-tracked in order that the Government keeps up its constitutional obligation towards the retired employees to ensure to protect their Right to Life and enabling them to live with dignity and equality.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



17/1/25

(R.R. Balasubramanian)
General Secretary

Copy to: 1. Shri V.Srinivas,
Secretary (Pension), DoP&PW
2. Ms. Roli Singh,
Addl. Secretary & DG CGHS