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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
NIRMAN BHAVAN, NEW DELHI - 110011

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Dear colleague,

We are all aware that there is no substitute for human blood. It cannot be manufactured and humans are the only source of blood for those who need this life-saving fluid.

2. Given that access to adequate and safe supply of blood and blood components is critical to enable a wide range of critical care procedures, the Ministry has been working towards strengthening blood services in States. Accordingly, NHM has been providing support to strengthen blood services including for Blood banks, Blood storage units, blood component separation units, manpower and equipment. To augment voluntary blood donation, NHM is also supporting blood collection and transportation vans with dedicated HR in addition to training on total quality management to the blood banks and blood storage units. NHM has also put in place erakt kosht, an integrated Blood Bank Management Information System which is a web based mechanism that connects all Blood Banks of the State into a single network and more pertinently adopts a comprehensive and total quality management approach

3. While the requirement for whole blood and blood components is constantly rising, there is no commensurate increase in blood supplies. More pertinently, while most public health facilities in States do not charge any cost for blood, they are collecting processing charges at varying rates ranging from Rs 50/unit of blood to Rs.1050/unit of blood. These processing charges not only add to Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE) at point of care to patients but also discourages voluntary donation as there is misconception that blood banks are collecting charges on blood donated free of cost.

4. Reducing OOPE is one of the key objectives of NHM. Hence all States/UTs must ensure that patients receive blood, after due processing, free of cost. This measure will provide immense relief to patients across the country in public health facilities by reducing out of pocket expenditure at point of care. This will also encourage voluntary blood donation needed to augment blood supply. States/UTs may seek support under NHM to implement this measure.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Manoj Jhalani)

1. Additional Chief Secretary/ Principal Secretary/ Secretary (H & FW) – all States/UTs
2. Mission Director (NHM) – All States/UTs