

SERUM TIMES

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SERUM MEDICAL BULLETIN

From the desk of the Editor-in-Chief

Dear Doctors / Readers,

We hope you all are well. The intensity of the pandemic is known to be decreasing. Many countries including India have been relaxing the restrictions according to their own assessments. In this situation Britain is in unique position. The government of the country has decided to lift all restrictions of Covid related protocols. Anybody affected by corona virus should not stay in quarantine. But WHO has not advised any country not to maintain corona protocol. Actually the organization is in favour of continuing some Covid protocols.



But one has to think that almost 85% of the residents of Britain aged above 12 years have already been vaccinated with two doses. In India, as on February 20, only 56% of people (77.3 crore) have been fully vaccinated. So, India can not follow the path of Britain. We hope Indians have to continue the Covid protocol unless the danger subsides at the lowest level.

In this issue we are going to discuss a special topic that we do every year after the presentation of Union Budget in the parliament for the next financial year (FY). In ST only health aspect is discussed. We are interested in the budget proposals as it covers medical and public health matters for the next FY.

Government's intervention in public health is a must. Public health is important because it is related to overall health of the people of a country. It is defined as "science and art of preventing diseases, prolonged life and improving quality of life through organized efforts and informed choice of society, organization and community and individuals." Better public health means better productivity of the country. Actually public health is an interdisciplinary field involving epidemiology, biostatistics, social sciences, etc. In the pandemic period people have understood better the role of public health.

It is known that many experts and observers have expressed their displeasure about the budget proposals for health sector for the coming FY 22-23. The next story will discuss elaborately on the subject.

We again wish you good health and request you to maintain Covid protocol. Stay safe.

With regards,

Sanjib Acharya

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Budget 22-23 especially emphasises a few areas only

Allocation on Health

For FY 22-23 the allocation of health sector has been increased only by less than Rs. 1000 crore. Allocation (revised estimate) for ongoing FY 21-22 is Rs. 82,290 crore. This is Rs. 83,000 crore for the coming FY 22-23. Department of Health Research received Rs. 3,200 crore. Additionally, allocation for Covid preparedness has been only Rs. 690 crore. If one looks for money transfer to states for health sector via centrally sponsored schemes, it is actually reduced to Rs. 47,634 crore from Rs. 50, 591 crore of the present FY's. The vaccine budget is drastically reduced to Rs. 5000 crore from Rs. 39,000 crore in FY 22.

The two areas that receive extra attention have been one, on setting up tele-mental health centres, and two, National Digital Health Ecosystem (NDHE). The NDHE is meant for digitizing health records and create health facilities for the people.

Points to consider

First & foremost, Sailaja Chandra, a former secretary pointed out after the Budget presentation by FM that the big-ticket items like digitization depended on technology. But actual need had been the problem related to physical visit to doctors, carry prescription and wait in queue. The need of the hour was to have good coordination among doctors, patients and the system of treatment. Secondly, Chandra mentioned a real difficulty is the availability of hospital beds. Out of 19 lakh beds in India as many as 62% were in private sector. Among those 95% were in small hospitals and nursing homes. How



the digitisation could bring in both of all private and government managed beds was a question, according to Chandra.

Another former health secretary, K Sujatha Rao, pointed that the Budget should have taken measures that could lower the rising inequality among Indians due to pandemic related treatment. An estimated Rs 70,000 crore had been spent by people out of pocket during the pandemic. She also pointed out that during pandemic several important health issues like drug resistant HIV, tuberculosis experienced about 30% shortfall in coverage. The budget could have addressed the issue.

Many observers spoke about that Covid pandemic created a social consensus on the need of strengthening out health system. But the Budget seemed to be indifferent to that, commented many observers.



Link between Alzheimer's and circadian clock discovered

A group of US researchers recently have observed that Alzheimer's arises due to problems related to circadian rhythm. Circadian rhythm or cycle means a natural and internal process that regulates the sleep-wake cycle and repeats roughly every 24 hours. That means Alzheimer's develops mainly as a result of sleeping irregularities.

The issue

People who develop Alzheimer's disease can experience sleep disturbances years before the condition takes hold. But the problem was whether one causes the other, It means there is also an uncertainty relating to the cause and effect of Alzheimer's and sleeping disturbances. Even the scientists were not sure about whether there could have been anything more complex that may be involved behind it. The Guardian recently (February 10, 2022) reported that the researchers in the US have shed light on the mystery. Many observers are hopeful about the new therapies. So, one has to determine how good sleep hygiene could help to tackle the disease and its symptoms.

The discovery

The research has been done at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, New York under the leadership Dr. Jennifer Hurley. It was observed that Alzheimer's took hold when connections were lost between nerve cells in the brain. The disease was progressive and was linked to abnormal plaques and tangles of proteins that steadily built up in the brain. The disease was most common of dementia.



The study also found that to keep the brain healthy, immune cells called microglia sought out and destroyed troublesome proteins that threatened to accumulate in the brain. One type of protein targeted by the cells is called amyloid-beta which might be a hallmark of Alzheimer's.

The Guardian quoted Hurley as saying, "the disruption of the proper timing of amyloid-beta clearances could be one of the reasons we see an increase in plaques that form in the brain during Alzheimer's disease."

But the researchers pointed out that at times sleep disturbances often arise before Alzheimer's disease. They thought that there was a complex interplay between the two. Disrupting sleep and circadian rhythms allowed amyloid beta to build up. But this, in turn, damaged brain cells that ran the circadian clock. This causes further accumulation of amyloid-beta.

It is expected that the new research will open a door to treat Alzheimer's in a better way.

CSR Activity of SERUM throughout February 2022



Feb 11: Renowned singers & musicians performed at the musical event "Antabihin ... Boro sunyo sunyo din ..." in Memorium of Smt Lata Mangeshkar at Serum Auditorium



Feb 5: Celebration of Saraswati Puja at Serum Auditorium



Feb 19: Alambazar Math in association with SERUM Group observed, celebrated & organized the 126th year of Swamiji's return to Kolkata



Feb 20: Bengali Slogan Writing & Recitation Competition organized by SERUM Group at Serum Auditorium



Feb 20: SERUM Group launched Sabuj Graher Rahasya & Rajbarite Raktapat books by Dr. Prabhat Bhattacharya



Feb 26: Free Doctor's Clinic & Diagnostic Service

Feb 27: Sri Sanjib Acharya, Chairman, SERUM Group was at various Blood Donation & Free Health Checkup Camps



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