

Chhattisgarh Drugs and Medical Supplies Policy

Introduction

Drugs and medical supplies play an important role in the delivery of health care. Sufficient attention is often not given to this important aspect of health care. The State Government has therefore decided to formulate a policy in this regard. Implementation of this policy will improve the availability of drugs and medical supplies. It will lead to use a rational use and management of drugs and medical supplies according to the needs of the State. This policy will make procurement, distribution and utilization of drugs and medical supplies more efficient, transparent and accountable, which will benefit the people of the State directly. A well-functioning health system reduces the burden of poverty and improves the standard of living of the people to a large extent. The portion of family income which is spent on medical treatment can be invented for development of the family. Availability of essential drugs and medical supplies is necessary to ensure proper utilization of the services provided by Primary Health Centers. Since majority of services provided by Primary Health Centers are used by women and children special attention must be given to medical supplies related to them. Overall goal of the Chhattisgarh Drugs and Medical Supplies Policy is to improve the health of the people of Chhattisgarh through the use of safe, effective, good quality and affordable essential drugs and medical supplies. It also aims to reduce irrational and unscientific drug use that is a drain on the incomes of an impoverished population and that is often hazardous as well.

In order to achieve the objectives of this policy special attention will need to be given to the following:

1. Safe, effective and good quality essential drugs and medical supplies are available at reasonable prices at all times to the people of the State.
2. The underprivileged are served on principles of equity and social justice.
3. Rational use of drugs is promoted in public as well as private sector through better regulation, improved training, dissemination of drug information, rational prescribing, and dispensing practices and improved patient's compliance.
4. An effective organizational structure is established in the public sector based on transparency and accountability for procurement, storage, distribution and use of drugs and medical supplies.
5. Qualified and trained personnel are available at all levels for procurement, storage, distribution, use and regulation of drugs and medical supplies.

1. Availability and accessibility

Safe, effective and good quality essential drugs and medical supplies should be available at reasonable prices at all times to all the people of the State. At present the outreach of health care facilities of the public sector is not adequate. A Large number of people depend on the private sector for medical treatment. Poor people find it difficult to purchase many essential drugs and medical supplies because of their high cost. Mechanism for making essential drugs and medical supplies available prices which the poor can afford is therefore a priority of the State Government. This can be done by simultaneously increasing the outreach of the public sector, and also by enabling the sale of low cost high quality essential drugs in the private sector. Increase in the outreach of the public sector shall be achieved by ensuring adequate

supplies of essential drugs and medical supplies to public health care facilities, health workers and volunteers. Low cost medicines shall be made available in the private sector by promoting rational prescription and drugs use, dissemination of drug information and proper regulation of the drug and medical supplies market. The state shall also encourage setting up of no-profit medical shops for providing low cost drugs and medical supplies by NGOs.

Essential Drugs List

Government of Chhattisgarh has prepared the Essential Drugs List after discussion with all concerned. The aim of this discussion was to ensure that the selection of drugs to be included in the Essential Drugs List of Chhattisgarh is based on well-accepted principles of essential drugs. Essential drugs are basic drugs, which are of the utmost importance and are indispensable to satisfy the health needs of the population. They should be available at all times at designated facilities and with designated health care providers in appropriate dosage form. Some important points in this regard are: -

1. The drugs selected have been identified and listed by their generic name or the International Non-proprietary Names (INN). The Government has issued orders that drugs will be procured in the public sector only by generic names. Government will make all necessary efforts to implement the generic policy including generic labeling in the private sector as well. Further it would insist on all drugs supplied in the public health sector should be labeled in Hindi.
2. Selection of essential drugs is based on Standard Treatment Guidelines and special attention has been paid to: -
 - i. Disease prevalence in Chhattisgarh.
 - ii. Actual need for the drug;
 - iii. Efficacy;
 - iv. Safety and good quality;
 - v. Therapeutic advantage as compared with available alternative drugs;
 - vi. Intended level of care, ranging from the highest to the lowest level of health care delivery.
 - vii. Cost - including the cost of a full course of treatment;
3. The Government will ensure that sufficient provision is made to allow for drugs, not listed in the Essential Drugs List, required for meeting exceptional cases of medical needs.
4. Essential Drugs List will be reviewed and revised every second year in accordance with the latest available drug information. The Government will aim at keeping the number of drugs in the list at a reasonable number. Fixed dose ratio combinations and new drugs will only be introduced if they offer proven advantage over existing drugs.

Procurement of Drugs and Medical Supplies in the Public Sector

Systems will be developed for procurement of good quality essential drugs and medical supplies, at competitive price, in adequate quantities within the available resources, taking full advantage of the benefits of centralized rate fixation and procurement systems and cost effective distribution arrangements. Government will ensure that efficient and transparent and accountable procedures are followed.

Distribution of Drugs and Medical supplies in the Public Sector

A co-ordinated, cost-effective and efficient system of distribution of drugs and medical supplies shall be made. Safe and timely distribution of drugs and medical supplies to public health facilities to ensure access for the poorest sections of society at all levels of care. A network of district level drug stores, linked to the state warehouse, managed by trained personnel, operating on the basis of clear operational guidelines, would form the key to the distribution system. Government recognizes the importance of transport in the distribution arrangements of drugs and medical supplies. Appropriate financial powers shall be delegated at the district level to make arrangements for transport and distribution within the district.

Stock management and storage in the Public Sector

There is a need for having appropriate systems, manuals and procedures of stock management of drugs and medical supplies in public health facilities at all levels. This is necessary to maintain good quality and safety of drugs and medical supplies, and minimize wastage. A computerized system will be developed for stock management, inventory control, administration, finance and accounting, internal control and auditing. Government will ensure that the drug management system can respond adequately to fluctuations in demand in different health facilities in different seasons and in different situations.

Financing of Drug Supply

While the money available for procurement of drugs and medical supplies is limited, all efforts will be made to ensure regular availability of essential life saving drugs and medical supplies at all times. Mechanisms of Additional resource mobilizations like users fees etc. shall also be explored. Special efforts will be made to ensure that the available resources are properly utilised, and there is no wastage.

Quality assurance both in the public and private sector

1. All drugs and medical supplies which are available in the state and used by the public must be safe, efficacious and of good quality. This can be done by effectively implementing the Drugs and Cosmetics Act and rules made there-under. The state is also committed to the implementation of National Drug Policy, for manufacture, import, distribution and sale of drugs. The industry will be encouraged to follow the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) as specified by WHO. Government will assist efforts by the pharmaceutical industry to improve quality assurance standards. Post market surveillance will be strengthened and maintained through appropriate regulation, inspection, sampling and analysis.
2. Government will work towards a scheme of introducing registration of all drugs moving in Chhattisgarh irrespective of their origin. The Chhattisgarh drug registration will be based on: (1) Government of India approval of safety and efficacy of the active ingredient(s), (2) verification of manufacturing license issued by the state where the manufacturing unit is situated and (3) evaluation of documentation covering pharmaceutical and chemical aspects, stability, batch documentation, packaging, labeling etc.
3. A State Drug Testing Laboratory will be established to undertake testing of drugs and medical supplies moving through the private and public supply system.

4. A system of accreditation of private drug testing centers will also be drawn up. These would be used also for testing samples from those drugs procured by the public health system in addition to the state drug testing facility.
5. The State Drug Controller will establish procedures for the recall of any sub standard drug from the market.
6. Collaboration and information exchange with other drug control and procurement agencies will be developed.
7. Appropriate structures and communication channels shall be put in place to disseminate information that will enable government, local manufacturers and suppliers to take early action and prevent drug shortages.

Rational drug use

It must be ensured that drugs are prescribed dispensed and used rationally, both in the public and private sectors, in order to maximize the therapeutic benefits and minimize the costs involved. This will be done through -

1. A transparent and accountable system of procurement and distribution in the Public Sector.
2. Strict enforcement of regulations regarding hazardous and banned drugs.
3. Activities related to rational drug use will be integrated with other public health care issues at all levels.
4. A prescription audit of drug usage in the public sector as well as the private sector will be periodically undertaken to have a measure of the extent of rational drug usage.
5. Public sector prescribing and dispensing will be by generic name only and will be in accordance with the Standard Treatment Guidelines.
6. The Government will strengthen and, on a regular basis monitor, the implementation of the essential drugs concept and rational use of drugs in the private and public sector. For the private sector it would actively promote the use of generic name and encourage advocacy for self regulation and promotion of the concepts of essential drug use by professional bodies.

Training

All health providers at each level of the public health care delivery system who prescribe and dispense drugs, and diagnose diseases, will be fully trained in the essential drugs concept and rational use of drugs. This will involve both induction and in-service training. Help of professional bodies will be sought to make such training, part of the requirements for continued registration. Efforts will be made to incorporate essential drugs concept and the rational use of drugs into the formal training curricula of all health providers.

Drug information

Dissemination of accurate, current, localized, appropriate, ethical and unbiased information on drugs and vaccines will be done to all health workers, patients and the general public using the media and other means. The government has already prepared and published the essential drugs list, formulary and standard treatment guidelines. These will be widely circulated. Recognizing the high degree of irrational use of drug in the private sector as a major problem the, government will make a start by first requiring all drugs sold in Chhattisgarh to be notified to the government along with drug information about them. This information will be placed on a website. This will help initiate steps for better public

information. It will, it is hoped develop consensus of all stakeholders for a better regulatory framework. A State Drugs and Therapeutic Policy Advisory Committee will be formed to collaborate with interested groups in the development of an information education and communication (IEC) strategy targeted to the health professionals and the general public. The government will promote ethical criteria for the promotion of drugs in line with the principles contained in the National and WHO Ethical Criteria for Medicinal Drug Promotion.

Monitoring And Evaluation

Department of Health and Family Welfare will monitor the implementation of guidelines contained in this policy. For this purpose appropriate indicators will be developed based on the *WHO indicators for monitoring drug policies*. Availability of drugs and rational drugs use will be monitored by surveys.