

Shiva Gopal Mishra
Secretary

Ph.: 23382286
National Council (Staff Side)
Joint Consultative Machinery
for Central Government Employees
13-C, Ferozshah Road, New Delhi - 110001
E-Mail : nc.jcm.np@gmail.com

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All the Staff Side Members
of National Council – JCM

Dear Comrades,

Meeting with Staff Side of National Council – JCM held on 08/02/2023 under the Chairmanship of Secretary (H.F.W) to discuss the demands of the Staff Side pertaining to the Ministry of Health & F.W

A meeting with Staff Side of National Council – JCM held today under the Chairmanship of Shri Rajesh Bhushan IAS, Secretary (H.F.W) to discuss the demands of the Staff Side pertaining to the Ministry of Health & F.W. The Staff Side was represented in the meeting by Comrades, Shiva Gopal Mishra Secretary Staff Side, Guman Singh Member, C. Srikumar Member and R.N.Parashar Member Staff Side. Before the agenda points were taken up for discussion the staff Side raised the following urgent issues for the favourable consideration of the Ministry of Health & F.W.

1. The CGHS beneficiaries both serving employees and pensioners are very much a dissatisfied lot. They are being harassed, since many empanelled hospitals are denying cashless treatment to the beneficiaries and insisting to pay the treatment charges to get it reimbursed through CGHS on the plea that a huge amount is due from the Government / CGHS authorities for the treatment which they have already given to the CGHS beneficiaries. Therefore to settle this problem steps may be taken to clear the bills of these CGHS empanelled Hospitals and hospitals should be instructed to not deny medical treatment to the CGHS beneficiaries. It is pertinent to mention here that the Hospitals are charging from the patients a huge amount over and above the CGHS prescribed rates. The CAG in its report No.17 of 2022 had pointed out that in the year 2020 -21 alone the overbilling amount is **Rs. 152.06** crore by the Health Care Organizations. Such overbilling by the HCOs should be taken seriously and hospitals should be strictly instructed to not charge over and above the prescribed charges. There should be a time limit in the CGHS / Ministry of Health for settlement and payment of dues to the Hospital so that the employees and pensioners are not harassed.
2. CAG has further pointed out that 6.32 Lakh claims amounting to Rs. 527.62 crore were outstanding as on 31st March 2021. CGHS replied (April 2022) that due to budget deficit, amount remained outstanding. Due to this outstanding dues to the empanelled hospitals ultimately the beneficiaries are the sufferers and victims. This issue needs to be addressed.

3. Many multispecialty Hospitals in major cities have withdrawn from the CGHS empanelment and new Hospitals are not coming forward to sign MOU on the ground that the existing CGHS rates are very low. No revision in the rates for conservative treatments, consultation fees, investigation fees and package rates etc are not revised since 2014. Considering the inflation and the escalation in the cost of medicines and other medical procedures the rates needs to be revised at least once in five years. The present rates may be immediately revised so that the hospitals did not refuse to give treatment to the CGHS beneficiaries.
4. The Ministry of Defence through their Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) have empanelled many Private Hospitals in almost all the districts of the country. CGHS also may empanel the hospitals which are empanelled by ECHS. The 7th CPC has also recommended that there should be a strong National Network of combined Health Facilities for the Central Government employees and pensioners through CGHS – ECHS- RELHS by having a combined Network of various medical scheme. The Ministry of Health may consider this recommendation and further to have a exclusive discussion with the Staff Side in this regard.
5. It has been brought to our notice that the Government wants to link CGHS with Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) to provide treatment for CGHS beneficiaries in government hospitals instead of Private Hospitals and that CGHS beneficiaries are advised to link their CGHS ID with ABHA. This has caused lot of apprehensions in the minds of CGHS beneficiaries especially pensioners. This needs to be clarified since the Staff Side Office is receiving lot of references in this regard.
6. The commitment given in the past for Establishing Wellness Centre in almost all the districts of the country may be implemented since even today a large number of towns were considerable number of Central Government Employees and pensioners are living ar not having the CGHS benefits.
7. Agenda given by the Staff Side for increasing the Fixed Medical Allowance to Rs. 3000 p.m is not included in the Agenda. Since the Government had been persistently rejecting the demand for the application of CS (MA) Rules to the Pensioners who are not CGHS beneficiaries, this demand is justified as Rs.1000/- is very meager and the Pensioners are to spend sizeable amount for outpatient treatment, it is requested that the FMA may be revised to Rs. 3000/- pm immediately.

8. The wellness Centers which were already approved like in Katni at M.P. State etc are not yet established subjecting the pensioners of these places to travel a long distance for getting medical treatment

The Staff Side also submitted a representation to the Ministry of Health with regard to the change of **Ward entitlement** in the case of those employees who retired in the 7th CPC pay scale between 01/01/2006 and 31/01/2017.

Responding to the above issues raised by the Staff Side the Chairman (Secretary HFW) stated the following:-

1. As on now all the outstanding dues to the empanelled hospitals were settled and it has come to zero level. In future it will be ensured that the dues of the hospitals are cleared in a time bound manner.
2. As regards revision of the GCHS rates for the various procedures / Consultation fee etc meetings are being held with the Associations of CGHS empanelled Hospitals and a decision is expected to be taken at the earliest.
3. It is now expected that the problems being faced by the CGHS beneficiaries would be settled and cashless treatment would be continued by the hospitals without any disruption.
4. The issue raised by the Staff Side for empanelment of all the ECHS recognized Hospitals by the CGHS would be considered and if the ECHS empanelled hospitals are prepared to accept the CGHS rates then it can be easily done
5. As regards the apprehensions expressed by the Staff Side with regard to Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA), Secretary clarified that it is a voluntary scheme and it is not going to take away any of the CGHS facilities available to the employees and pensioners. It is only to open an account of the individuals for maintaining the health / treatment details for his or her benefit for taking treatment any where. We requested to issue a clarification in this regard.

Thereafter the following Agenda Points were taken up for discussion and the decision taken on the agenda points after discussion is given below:-

1. Grant of the benefit of entitlement of ward under CGHS to the pensioners as per the revised pay in Pay Band

Decision

The proposal of the Staff Side for extending the revised ward entitlement benefit to those employees who retired prior to 01/02/2017 and also the pensioners whose basic pay was notionally fixed in the 7th CPC for pension benefits would be considered by the Ministry of Health

2. Grant of CGHS facility to disabled daughter after marriage.

Decision

The demand would be considered

3. Health insurance for Pensioners:

Decision

The issue is under discussion with Department of Expenditure

4. Establishing CGHS wellness centers at the newly sanctioned stations.

Decision

The matter is under examination

5. Reimburse medical expenses of pensioners who are not covered by the CGHS.

Decision

The Staff Side demand for increasing the FMA to Rs.3000/- would be considered in consultation with Department of Expenditure

6. Increase the number of empanelled hospitals so as to have hospitals recognized in each revenue district.

Decision

As on now 1800 hospitals are empanelled. More private hospitals are being approached by the Additional Directors of various regions through CGHS Panchayat and efforts are in hand to increase the empanelled hospitals up to 3000.

7. Lack of staff in Dispensaries taken over from the Postal Department.

Decision

Efforts are being taken to fill up the Staff vacancies throughout the Country. 259 candidates from different categories are going to be appointed shortly. Proposal has been forwarded to Department of Expenditure for approval of recruiting 354 Pharmacist.

8. CGHS entitlement of pensioners retired from the Union Territory of Lakshadweep. And Andaman Nicobar Islands

Decision

The Demand would be examined

9. CGHS related problems of Kerala Region

Decision

As on now Long Term Contract is signed for supply of 500 types of medicines to the CGHS wellness centers located in Kerala. There is no pendency of any medical claim. If further problems are there Staff Side can bring the same to the notice of the Ministry.

10. On line consultation facility in CGHS to be extended to other Cities.

Decision

This facility is now extended to all the CGHS Wellness Centers. We requested that the facility should be user free and it should not consume time. Secretary directed the officials to make the system user free by revising the modules.

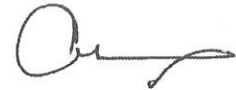
11. Restoration of cashless medical services to the pensioners and CGHS beneficiaries CGHS empaneled private hospitals

Decision

With the dues cleared to all the Hospitals, and streamlining the passing of the claim and releasing payments due in a time bound manner and with the revision of CGHS rates within a short period there would not be any problem for cashless medical services.

We also requested the Secretary that Special cases such as Liver Transplantation etc referred by the Ministries / Departments should be given approval without delay because the delay will cause serious problem to the patients. Secretary immediately issued directions that such cases should be approved within the shortest period.
With warm greetings,

Comradely yours



(Shiva Gopal Mishra)
Secretary

