



Union Health Ministry Releases Comprehensive Guidance Document on Diabetes Mellitus in Children at National Summit on Best Practices

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Guidance Document Introduces an Integrated Continuum of Care from detection to long-term follow-up

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In a landmark step towards strengthening child health services, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare released the Guidance Document on Diabetes Mellitus in Children at the recently concluded National Summit on Best Practices in Public Healthcare Service Delivery.

The Guidance Document establishes, for the first time, a structured and standardized national framework for the screening, diagnosis, treatment and long-term management of childhood diabetes. This initiative positions India among a select group of countries that have integrated childhood diabetes care into the public health system.

The document aims to ensure universal screening of all children from birth to 18 years, with early identification through community and school-based platforms. Suspected cases will undergo immediate blood glucose testing, followed by timely referral to district-level health facilities for confirmatory diagnosis and treatment.

A key feature of the framework is the provision of a comprehensive, free-of-cost care package at public health facilities. This includes screening, diagnostic services, lifelong insulin therapy, monitoring devices such as glucometers and test strips, and regular follow-up care. The approach is designed to reduce financial burden and ensure uninterrupted treatment for child diagnosed with diabetes.

The Guidance Document also introduces an integrated continuum of care, linking community-level screening with district hospital-based management and advanced care at medical colleges. This convergence ensures that no child is lost in the system and that care continues seamlessly from detection to long-term follow-up.

To support early detection, the initiative promotes the “4Ts” awareness framework – Toilet, Thirsty, Tired and Thinner – enabling parents, teachers and caregivers to recognize early warning signs of Type 1 Diabetes.

In addition to clinical protocols, the document emphasizes family and caregiver empowerment, providing structured training on insulin administration, blood glucose monitoring, emergency response and daily disease management. It also outlines evidence-based treatment guidelines, regular monitoring schedules, and protocols for preventing complications.

The initiative is expected to deliver significant public health benefits, including reduced mortality due to early detection, prevention of complications, and improved quality of life for affected children. Over the long term, it will contribute to lowering healthcare costs and strengthening health system capacity for managing non-communicable diseases among children.

The release of this Guidance Document underscores the Government's commitment to ensuring accessible, affordable, equitable and quality healthcare for all children, with a focus on early intervention, continuity of care and improved health outcomes.

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