

Private Sector Participation in Family Planning

Hausala Sajheedari

A Great Leap Forward

The government of Uttar Pradesh invites private health facilities and family planning surgeons in the state to join hands with the government for the cause of family planning and contribute to the state's commitment for FP2020, thereby helping the state achieve the larger vision of stabilising the population growth. The whole process of accreditation and reimbursement of private sector health facilities has been simplified through a dedicated online web portal called "Hausala Sajheedari" which provides end-to-end solution.



The London Summit for FP2020 was a transformational moment, which inspired the global community to commit itself for expanding access to voluntary family planning services to 120 million couples globally by the year 2020. To achieve this ambitious goal, Uttar Pradesh state needs to contribute over 12 million new users, which is perhaps the single largest contribution to be made by any state or province globally. Going by the current trend of new family planning users being enrolled, the government of Uttar Pradesh clearly recognises that public sector alone will not be able to achieve this mammoth task while meaningful and substantial contribution must be sought from the wide network of private sector spread across the state, though mostly urban centric. The task of creating this partnership would not be an easy run, given the trust deficit with private sector for engaging with government programs emanating from the past experience of long drawn accreditation process of paper based application requiring multiple follow-ups and running around to get all necessary clearances done from the district, coupled with lack of accountability and abuse of discretionary powers. This was further made complex by lack of clear guidelines and policy directions towards private sector partnership from accreditation of private hospitals, empanelment of private surgeons, process of reporting, verification etc.



In an unprecedented move, the Government of Uttar Pradesh through its National Health Mission and SIFPSA engaged with all key stakeholders including various development partners supported by BMGF, FOGSI, IMA and officials from Directorate of Family Welfare, finance department and legal cell for a comprehensive review of current status, existing policy and guidelines and bottlenecks that hindered private sector engagement and current process of accreditation, empanelment, reporting and reimbursement process. Based on the inputs gathered, the GoUP has announced an ambitious plan named "Hausala Sajheedari" which fundamentally changed the rules of engagement with comprehensive revision of policy through appropriate government orders and guidelines, simplifying processes and bringing greater transparency and accountability.

Under the Hausala Sajheedari program, the government of Uttar Pradesh invites private health facilities and family planning surgeons in the state to join hands with the government and contribute to the state's commitment for FP2020, thereby achieving the larger vision of stabilising the population growth. The whole process of accreditation and reimbursement of private sector health facilities has been simplified through a dedicated online web portal called "Hausala Sajheedari" which provides end-to-end solution designed and launched under the overall leadership and supervision of a state level apex body called State Task Force (STF) under the patronage of Principal Secretary - Health and Family Welfare, GoUP. The STF is led by the Executive Director SIFPSA and has representation from Directorate of family welfare, SIFPSA, Technical Support Unit of BMGF, other development partners, representative of private sector viz FOGSI and IMA and representative of CMOs from the field. A four-member secretariat called the Private Sector Partnership Cell (PSP cell) has been established at SIFPSA to support STF in its day-to-day functioning and maintenance, oversight and problem solving of "Hausala Sajheedari" web portal at the state level.



The private providers can just log in and follow the portal instructions. The Government of India norms for getting accredited are inbuilt in the portal and private providers can evaluate themselves on the available checklist. If they meet the eligibility criteria, a letter of interest will get generated automatically by the portal. The respective chief medical officers will get an alert simultaneously to initiate physical verification process. Provider can check application status online. System generated messages will give the approved or rejected status with reason. If provider gets approval, he will be called up to sign MOU with the CMO to provide services as per the norms. Surgeons who qualify eligibility criteria of providing surgical family planning services can apply online to get empanelled at CMO office. Accredited providers will be enabled to upload details of services and beneficiaries to get reimbursement. Reimbursement will be done only after due verification of services as per the norms set in the GO. Any grievance can be sent directly to the STF through web portal.

Hausala Sajhedari is an initiative to engage private sector health care providers in family planning service provision under government schemes wherein private hospitals/ nursing homes/institutions /individuals can get accredited/empanelled with the government and provide Family Planning services under standard reimbursement package from the government. Any private health care facility qualifying government eligibility criteria of physical infrastructure, quality assurance measures and qualified staff may present a letter of interest for being accredited to provide FP services under government schemes. Private organizations having good experience in providing family planning services may get accredited as Clinical Outreach Teams (COT) and can provide FP services at selected government facilities as per their MOU with the state and get reimbursed against services. An empanelled surgeon can perform surgery at his/her own facility, if it is accredited, can be member of COT team and can also provide service at government health facility after consent of the CMO on rates fixed by the government for the purpose. Surgeon empanelled in one district can perform surgery anywhere in India.

Some of the key features of the Hausala Sajheedari web portal are:

- Web portal provides one-stop solutions for private health care facilities and private sector surgeons in the state for online accreditation, empanelment, progress reporting, submission of claims and online reimbursement through bank transfers.
- Issuances of online empanelment certificate for accredited private health care facilities
- Once the verification and approval process is completed, the portal generates a Tripartite MoU which is signed between DHS, SIFPSA and private health care facility.
- State task force, with support from the PSP cell, oversees the process, reviews progress and provides overall leadership to the program
- Once accredited, the accreditation of private health care facilities is valid for 5 years, which is first time anywhere in India.
- SMS and E-mail based alerts sent to all concerned officials and stakeholders on "action required"

The web portal has accelerated private service providers' interest to get accredited and empanelled. This is a first such instance where private facilities are getting accredited for five years and providers are also getting empanelled and receiving an empanelment certificate from an appropriate government authority. The web portal has enhanced the government to create a base of providers/facilities other than public sector to cater to FP services across the state. The potential for the program could be well assessed by the fact that in last six months nearly 1200 private hospitals, including clinical outreach teams (COTs), have applied online for accreditation, out of which, 468 (including 13 COTs) have been empanelled till now. Similarly, over 900 private sector surgeons have applied online to be empanelled with the state to provide sterilization services (various techniques like MiniLap, Laparoscopic sterilization and Non Scalpel Vasectomy etc), out of which, 481 have been empanelled so far. The overwhelming response from the private sector has encouraged the GoUP to have a vision to accredit at least 1500 private hospitals and an equal number of surgeons for surgical family planning services in the private sector.

The initial assessment shows the private sector partnership has the potential to contribute at least 1,00,000 surgical family planning (female and male sterilizations) besides other long acting reversible contraceptives like IUCD and Injectables which will go a long way in contributing to the state's family planning needs, catering to the high unmet need for family planning in the community.



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