

## Health Ministry puts emphasis on controlling deafness

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### Dr Harsh Vardhan chairs multi-stakeholder consultation on prevention and control of deafness



"We have to work cohesively so that no child is left out for the screening and treatment related to hearing loss, as this is one of the key components of the vision of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji to make a healthy and new India by 2022", said Dr. Harsh Vardhan , as he chaired a high level multi-stakeholder consultation. 3 March is observed as "World Hearing Day".

Dr. Harsh Vardhan said that there is a strong need to create awareness for early detection and treatment related to hearing loss. He also said that hearing loss is the fourth leading cause for 'Years Lived with Disability' (YLD). Government of India has started the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Deafness (NPPCD) with focus on early identification, diagnosis and treatment of ear problems responsible for hearing loss and deafness. He further informed that the program is being implemented in 558 districts and total numbers of cases examined in the year 2019-20 (9 months) with deafness are 3,27,172 and total number of ENT surgeries performed are 18,745. The Union Health Minister also stated that the 13,411 hearing aids have been fitted and the number of person referred for rehabilitation are 45,953 during the year 2019-20, so far.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan advised that a more focused strategic approach is needed to implement this program in a mission mode. He stated that in order to strengthen the current program to achieve the goal, more brainstorming sessions, awareness camps, monitoring mechanisms etc., need to be started for the desired outcomes.

The Union Health Minister also suggested finding out the possibilities to associate NPPCD along with other national programs/schemes related to mother and child care. He also added that there is a strong need to promote public awareness through appropriate and effective Information, Education & Communication (IEC) strategies with special emphasis on prevention of deafness along with capacity building & development for prevention, early identification and management of hearing impaired and deafness cases. In addition, training would be provided from medical college level specialists (ENT and Audiology) to grassroot level workers.