

## Govt says free generic medicines on top priority

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With the aim to provide affordable health care to the people by reducing their out of pocket expenses on medicines, an initiative for free supply of essential medicines to the patients availing treatments in public health facilities in the country has been approved in the 12th Five Year Plan to promote rational use of medicines and reduce the consumption of inessential medicines. This information was revealed by the union minister of health and family welfare, Ghulam Nabi Azad in the parliament on August 23, 2013.

"There is an outlay of Rs 16,000 crore for this initiative in the 12th Plan. The initiative is based on the Tamil Nadu model where free medicines procured in bulk by the Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation (TNMSC), in generic name, directly from the manufacturers is supplied through an IT enabled supply chain management system to the public," said the minister further.

Azad also stated that the Central Procurement Agency has already been registered in the name of the Central Medical Services Society. He said that the modernization of health centers is the responsibility of the State / UT governments as it is a continuous and ongoing process.