

Health minister reviews H1 Influenza situation

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In a high powered meeting with senior officers of the department of health and family welfare, Health Research, AIIMS, Safdurjung, Dr RML Hospital, NCDC and officers from government of Delhi and Ghaziabad, the union minister for health and family welfare, Mr JP Nadda reviewed the state of preparedness and action taken to deal with H1N1 influenza cases.

The health minister stated that seasonal influenza cases are reported every year between Jan-March and decline immediately after the winter season is over. The bout of H1N1 during this period is that of seasonal influenza, the Minister stated. The Health Minister has stated that while there is no cause to panic, the central and state governments should be well prepared. He directed the central and states government to stock up on emergency requirements of medicine Oseltamivir, even though the centre and states have procured the same for their respective use. The health minister emphasised on the states having adequate quantity of personal protective equipment for healthcare workers, as also diagnostic facilities required for testing H1N1 samples should be ensured.

Mr Nadda has advised that the Integrated Disease Surveillance Program (IDSP) network should continue comprehensive and prompt reporting so that the districts/ states requiring more attention can be identified. The Health Minister has advised that the general public should take the necessary precaution such as covering ones mouth during coughing and sneezing, washing one's hands and avoid coming in touch with anyone who is exhibiting symptoms of the seasonal flu.

Present during the meeting were Shri Lov Verma, Secretary (H&FW); Dr Jagdish Prasad, DGHS; Dr V M Katoch, Secretary (Health Research); Dr BD Athani, Special DGHS; Dr H K Kar, MS, Dr RML Hospital; Dr PK Julka, Dean, AIIMS; Shri Sudhansh Pant, Jt Secretary, Dept. of Pharmaceuticals and senior offices of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and NCDC.