BioSpectrum
the business of Bi
24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

Govt expands control over prices of cancer drugs with patients expected to save Rs 2,500 Cr annually

11 October 2026 | News

Manufacturers of non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs will need to maintain their current production levels



The government has approved capping of margin on supply and sale of non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs. This margin will be limited to 30% of the maximum retail price (MRP). This measure is expected to bring down drug prices by up to 70% and help cancer patients save Rs 2,500 crore annually, which will significantly reduce the amount they have to pay out of pocket.

Stringent rules of maximum prices fixed by the government are already in place on essential cancer drugs included in the scheduled list. Under the new decision, price protection has also been increased for those cancer drugs (which are 'non-scheduled' or 'out of the list'); For this, the margin that can be added to patients before they reach them has been limited.

An expert committee under the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) will finalise the list of drugs to be covered. After this, the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) will take a decision and issue a notification.

NPPA's analysis of market data showed that non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs increase by about 170% on average, which in some cases can be as high as 700% or even more. To put it simply, the price of a drug increases rapidly as it passes through the supply chain before it reaches the patient.

Prices also vary significantly depending on where the medicine is being purchased from a retail pharmacy, hospital pharmacy or online pharmacy.

To ensure that these life-saving drugs remain available, manufacturers of non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs will need to maintain their current production levels.

The initiative will cover anti-cancer non-scheduled drugs. These include branded and generic, domestically manufactured and imported, patented and unpatented drugs. This will give patients a lot of benefit from low prices and at the same time they will continue to get the necessary medicines.