

Chapter 2

Role of the Government in Health

Q. 1 In this chapter you have read that health is a wider concept than illness. Look at this quote from the Constitution and explain the terms ‘living standard’ and ‘public health’ in your own words.

An important part of the Constitution says it is the “duty of the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health.”

Ans.: The term living standard means that the basic necessities like food and shelter available to the people living in different regions. The standard of living of people living in urban areas is comparatively better than those in rural areas. The provision of clean air and water results in a better standard of living.

On the other hand, in underdeveloped areas with non-availability of clean water and air, people are prone to illness and have poor living standards.

The term 'public health' denotes the well-being of the people irrespective of their income, gender, education level etc. Everyone has got the basic right to avail health care services, to remain disease-free and healthy. The significance of word PUBLIC is that the health care services are provided by the government and available to all without any discrimination.

Q.2 What are the different ways through which the government can take steps to provide healthcare for all? Discuss.

Ans.: The different ways through which the government can take steps to provide health care for all are:

- 1) Healthcare centres should be accessible to the rural and underdeveloped areas.
- 2) Services like ambulance and mobile hospitals in remote areas should be provided
- 3) Proper sanitation and use of clean toilets should be promoted.
- 4) People should be made aware of unhygienic and unhealthy practices through various campaigns and educational programs.
- 5) Clean and safe drinking water should be provided by the public organization at all levels of society,
- 6) Health camps and free medical checkup camps should be organized in remote areas.
- 7) Medicines and medical treatments should be available either free of cost or at affordable rates.
- 8) Marginalized sections of societies like women and underprivileged people should be provided with proper health care without any discrimination.

These are the various programs through which situation of public health could be improved in the country if they are implemented judiciously.

Q.3 What differences do you find between private and public health services in your area? Use the following table to compare and contrast these:

Facility	Affordability	Avallability	Quality
Private			
Public			

Ans.:

Facility	Affordability	Avallability	Quality
Private	Expensive (high cost)	Easy access to the services	Clean enviroment and well organized
Public	Chesap(afforadable cost)	Difficulty in availing proper health care services	Over –corwed medical facilities.

Above table concludes that the health care services provided by the private hospitals are better than the ones provided by the public health centers. The private medical facilities are managed more efficiently and effectively. The staff is well-educated and surrounding is clean. On the other hand, public hospitals are poorly managed with lack of modern medical technologies and practices. The cost of private medical services is on the higher side and not accessible by everyone. Whereas, the public health care facilities are affordable and used by poor people in all the sections of society.

Q.4 ‘Improvement in water and sanitation can control many diseases’. Explain with the help of examples.

Ans.: 1. There are various diseases like cholera, malaria, jaundice, typhoid, diarrhoea which are water-borne diseases. The provision of safe drinking water and proper sanitation can prevent the spreading of these diseases.

2. This could be done through various educational programs promoting healthy and better standard of living for people sponsored by the government agencies and active people’s participation.

Example- Cleaning of rooftops and water coolers to make sure there is no breeding of mosquitoes. There should not be any stagnation of water in and around the house. These are some of the measures which could control many water-borne diseases.