

CHAPTER- 2

ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN HEALTH

EXCECISES:

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.”

Answer:

1. Living Standard

- The level of living at which they live.
 - It is a low level if the basic needs are barely satisfied.
 - If one leads a comfortable life, the living standard is said to be of a higher level.

Public Health

- Public health means the health of the general public or people.
- The constitution ensures equal access to health to all without any discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, sex, religion, etc.

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

Answer: The government can take steps to provide healthcare for all by:

- Increasing the number of hospitals, healthcare centers, and family welfare centers.
- Organizing free camps for the check-up of the general public.
- Organizing Pulse Polio campaigns.
- Spreading health awareness among common people through different means. Workshops, seminars, and training camps can also prove to be effective ways.

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	Cost of services	Availability of services
private		
public		

Answer:

Facility	Cost of services	Availability of services
private	High, very expensive	Everything is available but on high cost
public	Either free or at very low cost	There is always rush at the public hospitals. Even though services are available there but it takes time.

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

Answer: Water and sanitation are the basic necessities for the maintenance of our health. Poor quality of water causes a lot of health problems. Similarly, poor sanitation causes many epidemics giving birth to dangerous insects and worms. Recently we saw the spread of Dengue caused by Aedes (a mosquito). Malaria is also caused by a mosquito called anopheles. Improvement in water and sanitation can control these happenings.

2 mark question:

- 1. What do people in a democratic country expect the government?**

Answer: People in a democratic country expect the government to work for their welfare.

2. Where do most doctors prefer to settle?

Answer: Most doctors prefer to settle in urban areas.

3. Name some water-borne diseases.

Answer: Diarrhoea, worms, hepatitis.

4. What problem do rural people face whenever they come in a grip of an illness?

Answer: They have to travel long distances to reach a doctor.

5. What do we need to prevent and treat illnesses?

Answer: We need appropriate healthcare facilities such as health centers, hospital laboratories for testing, ambulance services, etc.

6. What do you mean by a public health care system? [V. Imp.]

Answer: This is a system of hospitals and health centers run by the government.

7. What happened to Hakim Sheik?

Answer: One evening in 1992, he accidentally fell off a running train and suffered head injuries.

8. Why did Hakim Sheik file a case in the court?

Answer: Hakim Sheik filed a case in the court because of the indifferent attitude of various government hospitals that refused to admit him.

9. Who got costly medical treatment—Aman or Raryan?

Answer: Ranjan got costly medical treatment.

10. What did the court ask the State Government in the Hakim Sheik case?

Answer: The court asked the State Government to give Hakim Sheik the money that he had spent on his treatment.

11. What is the full form of RMPs? Where are they found?

Answer: Registered Medical Practitioners. They are found in rural areas.

12. Where are private services, easily available?

Answer: Private services are easily available in urban areas.

13. Why are poor people more likely to fall ill?

Answer: Poor people are more likely to fall ill because they are not provided basic necessities like drinking water, adequate housing, clean surroundings, etc.

14. Why are women not taken to a doctor in a prompt manner?

Answer: It is because women's health concerns are considered to be less important than the health of men in the family.

4 mark question:

1. Define health from broader perspective. [V. Imp.]

Answer: The common definition of health is the ability of a person to remain free of illness and injuries. But health is not only about the disease. It is something more than that. Apart from disease, we need to think of other factors such as safe drinking water, clean surroundings, etc. because they affect our health in various ways. If people fail to get these basic amenities of life, they will fall ill. Being active and in good spirits are also an essential part of health. We also need to be without mental stress, because we cannot be healthy for a long time if we are under mental strain.

2. Mention some positive aspects of healthcare in India. [Imp.]

Answer: Some positive aspects of healthcare in India are:

1. India has a good number of doctors, clinics, and hospitals. It is among the largest producers of doctors.
2. Healthcare facilities have grown substantially over the years. The number of hospitals grew from 11,174 in 1991 to 18,218 in 2000.
3. India gets a large number of medical tourists from several countries. They come for treatment in some of the world-famous hospitals in India.
4. India is the fourth-largest producer of medicines in the world and also a large exporter of medicines.

3. What are the negative aspects of healthcare in India? [Imp.]

Answer: The negative aspects of healthcare in India are:

1. Rural people face the crisis of doctors because most doctors settle in urban areas. They have to travel long distances to reach a doctor.
2. About live lakh, people die from tuberculosis every year. Almost two million cases of malaria are reported every year.
3. Clean drinking water is not available to all. As a result poor people easily become prey to various waterborne diseases such as diarrhea worms, hepatitis, etc.
4. Half of all children in India do not get adequate food to eat and are undernourished.

4. Write down the main features of the public health system. [V. Imp.]

Answer: The main features of the public health system are:

1. It provides quality healthcare services either free or at a low cost so that even the poor can seek treatment.
2. It takes action to prevent the spread of diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, jaundice, etc. Time to time it takes up a campaign to see that mosquitoes do not breed in water-codgers, rooftops, etc.
3. This system is available in both rural and urban areas.

5. What did the court say in the case of Hakim Sheik?

Answer: The court said that the difficulty that Hakim Sheik had to face could have cost him his life. If a hospital cannot provide timely medical treatment to a person, it means that the protection of life is not being given. The court also said that it was the duty of the government to provide the necessary health services, including treatment in emergency situations. Hospitals and medical staff must fulfill their duty of providing essential treatment. As various government hospitals refused to admit him, the State Government was asked to give Hakim Sheik the money that he had spent on his treatment.

6. How can you say that adequate healthcare is not available to all? [V. Imp.]

Answer: We can say without any doubt that adequate healthcare is not available to all in our country. The reason is that private services are increasing but public services are not. As a result, private services are mainly available to people. But these services are concentrated in urban areas and are very expensive.

Poor people hardly afford them whenever there is an illness in the family; they either borrow money or sell some of their possessions to pay for the expenses.

Thus, medical expenses cause great hardship for the poor. Therefore, they avoid going to the doctor unless it is very urgent.

It has been found that women are not taken to a doctor in a prompt manner. Their health concerns are easily ignored. Many tribal areas have few health centers and they do not run properly.

7 mark question:

1. Compare public health services with those of private health services. [V. Imp.]

Answer: (a) Public health services are run by the government while private health services are managed by individuals or companies.

(b) Public health services provide health care facilities either free or at a low cost so that even the poor can seek treatment easily. Thus, money-making is not the goal of public health services. So far private health services are concerned, they are run mainly for profit. They usually prescribe expensive medicines. It is common for private doctors to prescribe unnecessary medicines, injections or saline bottles when tablets or simple medicines can suffice.

(c) Public health services are found both in rural and urban areas. But private health services are concentrated in urban areas.

(d) We often find huge rush at the government hospitals. People have to wait for hours in a long queue. But private hospitals are maintained properly. People don't face such long queues there.

2. What is the Costa Rican approach? Explain. [V. Imp.]

Answer: Costa Rica is a country in North America. It is considered to be one of the wealthiest countries on the continent. The Costa Rican govt gave much importance to the health of its citizens. It took an important decision and decided not to have an army. In this way, it saved money and began to spend this money on health, education, and other basic needs of the people. The Costa Rican government believes that a country has to be healthy for its development and pays sincere attention to the health of its people.

The Costa Rican government provides all the basic services and amenities to all the people of the country. It provides clean drinking water, sanitation, nutrition, and housing. Health education has been made an important part of education and at all levels; students are provided knowledge about health. The Costa Rican approach towards health is praiseworthy and inspiring.

3. What major changes were made by the Kerala government in the state in 1996?

Answer: The Kerala government made some major changes in the state in 1996. It gave 40% of the entire state budget to panchayats so that they could plan and provide for their requirements. This made it possible for a village to make sure that proper planning was done for water, food, women's development, and education.

In this way water supply schemes were checked, the working of schools and anganwadis were ensured and specific problems of the village were taken up. Health centers were also improved.

In spite of all these efforts, some problems such as shortage of medicines, insufficient hospital beds, not enough doctors still exist and these are needed to be solved.

4: Explain the role of the government in promoting public health. Discuss with examples.

Answer: The government plays a crucial role in promoting public health through various initiatives and policies. One primary aspect is the provision of healthcare facilities accessible to all citizens. For instance, the government establishes and maintains hospitals, clinics, and health centers in urban and rural areas, ensuring healthcare reaches even remote populations. Additionally, it conducts vaccination programs to prevent the spread of diseases like polio, measles, and tuberculosis, which significantly contribute to public health improvement.

Furthermore, the government educates the public about hygiene practices and disease prevention through awareness campaigns. These campaigns emphasize sanitation, clean water supply, and personal hygiene, reducing the occurrence of preventable diseases. An excellent example is the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in India, which aimed to promote cleanliness and sanitation across the country, ultimately enhancing public health.

Moreover, the government regulates the quality of food, water, and pharmaceuticals through strict standards and monitoring. This ensures that citizens consume safe and uncontaminated products, reducing the risk of health-related issues due to poor-quality substances. In essence, the government's multifaceted

approach, including healthcare accessibility, awareness campaigns, and quality regulations, significantly contributes to promoting public health.

5: Discuss the importance of government-funded healthcare systems in ensuring a healthy population. Explain with examples.

Answer: Government-funded healthcare systems play a pivotal role in ensuring a healthy population by providing affordable and accessible medical services to all citizens. These systems prioritize healthcare as a fundamental right, ensuring that financial constraints do not hinder access to necessary medical care.

One significant example is the National Health Service (NHS) in the United Kingdom. The NHS offers free healthcare services to all residents, covering medical treatments, consultations, and hospital care. This comprehensive system has significantly improved the health outcomes of the population, irrespective of their financial status.

Moreover, in countries like Canada, the government-funded healthcare system ensures that citizens receive essential medical services without facing high costs. This system covers various healthcare aspects, including doctor visits, hospital stays, and necessary medical procedures, promoting overall public health.

Government-funded healthcare systems reduce the burden of healthcare expenses on individuals, ensuring timely treatment and preventive care. They prioritize the well-being of the population as a whole, contributing to healthier communities and improved life expectancy.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which factors, apart from disease, are mentioned as contributors to health?
 - a) Clean drinking water and a pollution-free environment
 - b) Lack of medical professionals in rural areas
 - c) Overcrowded living conditions and inadequate food
 - d) Long queues in hospitals and costly private facilities

Answer: a) Clean drinking water and a pollution-free environment

2. What is one of the reasons cited for the disparity in healthcare availability between urban and rural areas in India?

- a) A surplus of healthcare facilities in rural regions
- b) Higher costs of healthcare in urban areas
- c) Limited number of doctors in urban areas
- d) Equal distribution of government hospitals across the country

Answer: c) Limited number of doctors in urban areas

3. According to the text, what role does the government play in public health services?

- a) To provide exclusive services for the wealthy
- b) To regulate and control private health facilities
- c) To ensure quality healthcare services for everyone
- d) To limit healthcare access based on demographics

Answer: c) to ensure quality healthcare services for everyone

4. What distinguishes private health facilities from public health services?

- a) High costs and limited accessibility
- b) Exclusive government control and funding
- c) Accessibility for all income groups

d) Equal distribution across rural and urban areas

Answer: a) High costs and limited accessibility

5. Which approach to healthcare is exemplified by the Costa Rican government?

a) Prioritizing military funding over healthcare

b) Focusing on private healthcare expansion

c) Investing in health, education, and basic needs

d) Limiting access to healthcare based on income

Answer: c) Investing in health, education, and basic needs

Role of the Government in Health Summary:

The NCERT Class 7 Social and Political Life – II Chapter 2 talks about the following topics:

1. What is health
2. Healthcare in India
3. Public and private healthcare services
4. Public health services
5. Private health facilities
6. Healthcare and equality: Is adequate healthcare available to all
7. What can be done?
8. The Kerala experience
9. The Costa Rican approach

Social and Political Life – II is an important book for Class 7 Social Science subject. Apart from this chapter, the full set of [NCERT Solutions for Class 7 Social Science](#) is given in the linked article. Students also find notes, **sample papers**, and previous years' question papers on our website for free.