

OPERATIONALIZING HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTRES TO DELIVER COMPREHENSIVE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE: KARNATAKA'S JOURNEY

Preamble

The goal of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is to ensure that all people obtain the health services they need: preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative without the risk of financial hardship. Department of Health and Family Welfare (DOHFW) Government of Karnataka (GOK) is committed to the vision of accomplishing UHC, also outlined in National Health Mission framework as- “Enabling Universal Healthcare Access to Equitable, Affordable and Quality health care services, accountable and responsive to people’s needs. The path charted out by the Twelfth Five Year Plan for achieving UHC emphasizes provision of affordable, quality health care by the public health system as the main form of social protection.

- First AB-Health and Wellness Centre (HWC) was launched in April 2018. AB-HWCs aim to provide free and accessible comprehensive healthcare focusing on preventive, promotive, and curative care.

Under this programme state will be upgrading all PHCs, UPHCs and SC into Health and wellness Centres (HWCs).

Objectives:

- To reduce out of pocket expenditure by providing health services at the door-step of community.
- To strengthen two way referral system and follow-up care
- To screen population for NCDs thereby identify, treat and reduce morbidity and mortality
- Thus help country in reaching goal three of sustainable development Goal (SDG) which aims to remove poverty
- Enhance wellness activities to the community at their door step

To fulfil above objectives and establish the centres as HWCs state has to meet the below mentioned criteria's

- Provision of MBBS Medical Officer with Multi-skill training to MO& staff at all PHC & UPHC
- Provision of Community Health Officer (earlier known as Mid-level Health Care Provider (MLHP)) with capacity building for them under Certificate course in community Health along with multi skill training of CHO and Field staff including ASHA.

- Provision of essential drugs (181 @PHC; 135@SC-HWC) and diagnostics (63 @PHC; 14@SC-HWC)
- Provision of infrastructure including Branding & creation of wellness area at all PHCs and SC-HWCs

To ensure this state has adopted the Govt of India guidelines for upgrading all PHC & SCs in to HWCs.

Under this programme state will be providing all essential comprehensive primary Health Care (CPHC-UHC) services through Universal Health Coverage (Ayushman Bharat) under below mentioned packages free of cost to community

State was given a target of upgrading 11595 Health centres (8871 SC; 365 UPHCs and 2359 PHCs) in to Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs). State has already upgraded 365 (100%) all UPHCs and 2166 PHCs as well as 3339 SCs as HWCs. In current FY state will be upgrading 2859 SCs as HWCs. The process adopted to strengthen SC-HWCs was by recruitment of MLHPs/ CHOs on contract-basis by transparent recruitment system.

Rationale: As per the mandate of GOI all state needs to adopt a trained CHO at SC-HWC for operationalization. State has taken decision to consider BSc Nursing graduates for Community Health Officer post, and recruit them through transparent selection process. Hence the below process was adopted to select the CHOs in limited time

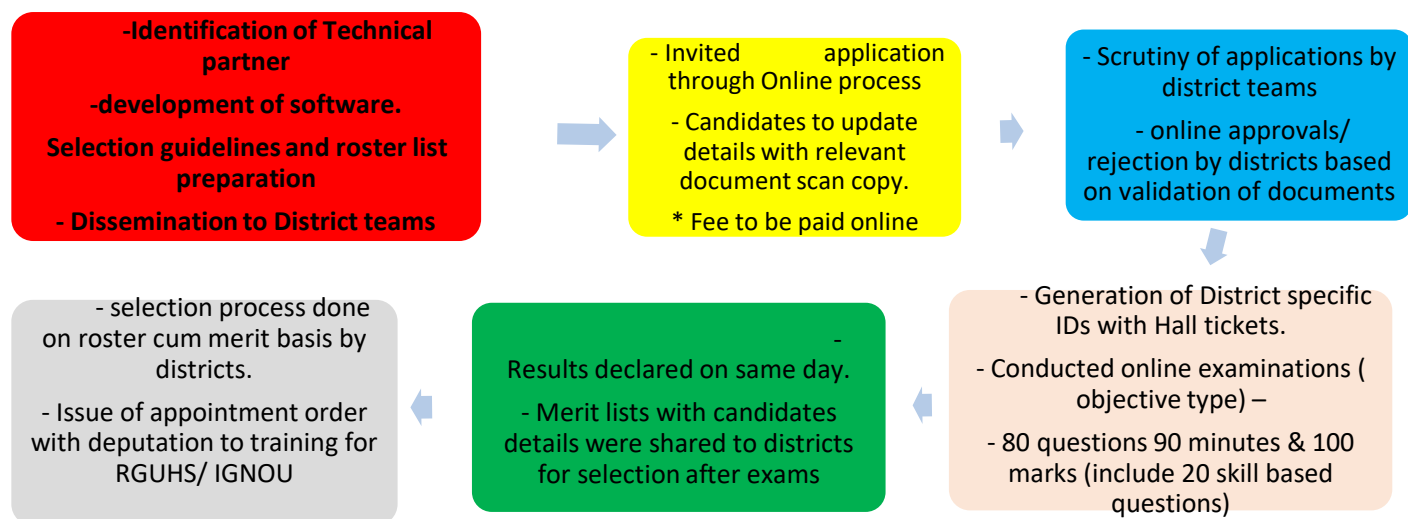
PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION:

Recruitment of CHOs to SC-HWCs:- Earlier to Ayushman Bharath programme (UHC) at Sub Centres (SCs) we were providing only field based health services through Primary Healthcare Officers (PHOs) i.e ANMs and Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs). But now state is upgrading all SCs into HWCs and will be establishing them as an institute, which shall provide clinic services along with preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative care services at SC-HWCs. Hence state is recruiting at CHO at SC-HWC level, who will be BSc Nursing graduates. State has adopted service delivery model for care and counseling to community for efficient referral and follow-up services at SC-HWC and to have effective coordination in health issues management at community level, hence CHOs are been selected from nursing community.

Karnataka state has adopted KEONICS model of Computer Literacy Test conduction method for online selection process to maintain transparency. The exams have been done successfully in state by Karnataka's own start-up company through department of IT-BT under guidance of KEONICS.

In present financial year state is selecting totally 3006 CHOs (2859 new & 147 vacancy posts) through online examinations as per the adopted below strategies.

The process adopted for CHO selection after cabinet approval:



The entire selection process has been completed every time. The number of candidates showing interest and applying for the post has been increased from 1:2 – 1:6 times in recent past. Acceptance by the candidates has also been raised due to online transparent selection process.

Expanding Human Resources: In Karnataka, a purposeful decision was taken only to identify BSc Nursing/Post Basic Nursing personnel with two years of experience as CHOs. The programme was expanded in below mentioned model

Details of the Progress attained by State (Year-wise Achievement)						
Year	Health Sub-Centres		Primary Health Centres		Urban Centres	Primary Health
	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
2016-17	105	105	0	0	0	0
2017-18	466	571	132	132	71	71
2018-19	505	505	0	0	0	0
2019-20	956	956	614	587	293	293
2020-21	1307	1268	1482	1447	1	1
2021-22	2859	Achievement in Progress through Recruitment & training of CHOs				
Total	6198	3300	2228	2166	365	365

Evidence of Effectiveness – State has adopted this online process for CHO selection from last 5 batches. The procedure for selection was quick and cost- effective. The online selection procedure had several advantages:

- The procedure is totally transparent and time tested.
- Provides fool proof for candidates for candidates as well as system.

- Saves time as well as adaptation of manpower usage in selection process.
- Provides evidence at all level for quality and quick candidate selection.

At present batch for the recruitment of 3006 posts of CHOs, about 6978 registered for examination of which 6714 were eligible to take exams, among them 6283 (94%) have attended the exams and 5071 (81%) were eligible for selection. Hence, the process was completed in one month with 80% candidates eligible for final selection.

Cost -

Cost for selection of the candidates is approx. Rs.600 per candidate which includes widespread advertisement, adoption of KEONICS Software, Online registration, verification of documents, generation of admission tickets, online examination with result declaration. Districts will be conducting only procedure for selection based on merit list obtained from online sources.

Summary of lessons and challenges –

The entire online procedure is computer system driven. Candidates can enroll at any point of time even after official working hours. Candidates can attach all relevant documents at his/her own time. Payment of fees will be online which saves a lot of time and energy for the candidates. Some candidates have done wrong attachment of documents; verification of documents is challenge to NHM. Process of exam conduction has multiple checks and security controls which will provide litigation free sense of comfort to NHM. However, Monitoring of the process needs to be done very stringently.

Potential for scale –

The concerned online examination is a computer based literacy evaluation process which identifies knowledge of candidates on his subject, skills on medical practice and computer knowledge. Similar type of examination is conducted for lakhs of students for computer literacy training through KEONICS agency. Karnataka state NHM has done first time experiment for online selection of candidates for jobs two years ago. It has given good results and has got huge scalability potential. In Karnataka, we had computer labs in all the B&C grade cities also. Hence, candidates can take exams at his residence point only. In future, it will be conducted in the pattern of NEET exam based on artificial intelligence technology.

Partners involved in Implementation-

Karnataka state has adopted KEONICS model of Computer Literacy Test conduction method for online selection process to maintain transparency. The exams have been done successfully by Karnataka's own start-up company namely Teckshetra through department of IT-BT under guidance of KEONICs.