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सचिव
APURVA CHANDRA, IAS
Secretary



भारत सरकार
स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग
स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय
Government of India
Department of Health and Family Welfare
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
D.O.No.C-18018/05/2024-SAS.III
22-8-2024

Subject: Reducing discrimination in health and strengthening the services for LGBTQ+

Dear Chief Secretary

The LGBTQ+ community is an important part of our society. They face discrimination in different aspects of life including healthcare. It is important to safeguard their rights and strengthen our health setup to suit the specific needs of the community. The following measures are proposed to ensure the rights of LGBTQ+ community with relation to healthcare :-

1. **Awareness Activities-** Plan awareness activities at various levels of healthcare and in the community on the issues of LGBTQ+.
2. **Prohibition of Conversion Therapy-** Ensure that no forced surgeries/procedures/treatment is done with an aim to change gender identity or sexual orientation.
3. **Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) Availability-** SRS be made available at Government hospitals. The ministry is preparing Standard Operating Procedures for the same.
4. **Changes in Curricula-**Inclusion of various issues related to LGBTQ+ in the curricula of various medical courses. This will sensitize future health professionals to attend to the specific needs of the community. National Medical Commission has issued an advisory regarding the same. Various institutions should follow the advisory.
5. **Availability of Tele consultation-** Strengthening of Tele consultation services for providing services to the community. TELE MANAS is a very useful tool to provide mental health services to the LGBTQ+ community. The staff providing these services should be trained to the specific needs of the community.
6. **Sensitizing and training various levels of staff-** The staff needs to have knowledge of various terminologies and relevant health care needs of the community. They should have a non-discriminatory attitude towards the community.
7. In case of care of patients who are terminally ill, provisions may be made to allow friends/close acquaintances to take decisions related to care when near relative/next of kin/family is not available.
8. In case of claim of body of deceased persons, provisions may be made to allow friends/close acquaintances to claim the body when near relative/next of kin/family is not available.

I hope that we will be able to implement these measures in our respective setups. With our combined efforts, I am confident that we will be able to reduce the discrimination in healthcare towards LGBTQ+ and provide suitable services.

with regards.

Yours sincerely,



(Apurva Chandra)

Chief Secretary all States & UTs