



City NGO files online petition for Patients' Rights Charter

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Pune: City-based 'Sathi,' an organisation of patients and health activists, has filed a change.org petition to Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, JP Nadda to 'adopt the Patients' Rights Charter and regulate rates in private hospitals'. Over 800 people have signed the petition from across the country in the past five days.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) finalised a 17-point charter in 2018 underlining the rights of the patient. The aim of this charter was to empower and create awareness among patients across the country. The charter has been pending with the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) since October 2018.

Sathi is also associated with Jan Arogya Abhiyan, which champions for the pa-

RIGHTS IN THE CHARTER...

- Right to information, records and reports, transparency in rates, and care according to prescribed rates.
- Right to emergency medical care, proper referral and transfer.
- Right to informed consent, confidentiality, human dignity, privacy and non-discrimination.
- Right to safety and quality care according to standards.
- Right to choose alternative treatment options and right to a second opinion.
- Right to choose a source for obtaining medicines or tests when admitted in hospital.
- Right to protection for patients involved in clinical trials and biomedical research.
- Right to take discharge of patient, or body of deceased, without being detained on procedural grounds.
- Right to patient education, right to be heard and seek redressal.

tients' rights. The petition states that the Union health minister should immediately adopt and implement the Charter for Patients' Rights, without any dilution. The petition also demands the authorities to ensure price control of services, to make care in private hospitals affordable and also to create a patient-friendly grievance

redressal mechanism.

The petition further demands that along with implementing the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) which gives aids care in private hospitals at public expense, the government should also give comparable priority to protect the rights of the patients, who obtain care in private

hospitals and suffer innumerable violations.

It is high time that these skewed priorities are changed and that the health ministry moves with utmost speed and effectiveness to take long-overdue steps, states the petition.

Echoing similar sentiments, Dr Abhijit More, city-based health expert and member of Jan Arogya Abhiyan, said, "As, through PMJAY, the government wants patients to go to a private hospital. However, without this charter, patients will not be aware of their rights."

"This charter by the NHRC has been historic. The authorities should have adopted the charter by now. There are more chances of patients facing problems with more and more patients getting benefits because of the Ayushman Bharat. In this case, the role of the charter becomes more important," said Dr More.



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Consultation on trafficking victims



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A one-day roundtable consultation was organised on Friday at Prayas Institute of Juvenile Justice here in collaboration with National Legal Services Authority to devise an action plan to link survivors of human trafficking with various schemes and programmes of NALSA. Human Liberty Network, a network of 16 voluntary organisations working in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority, Bihar State Legal Services Authority and various civil society organisations shared their inputs.

The objectives of the consultation were to propose an action plan on assistance to victims of trafficking; collab-

orations to curb child labour and child trafficking; bridging the gap between all departments and concerned individuals; and to ensure victims access to justice.

The consultation was chaired by director and additional director, NALSA. Prayas presented the action plan outlining various components such as implementation of NALSA Scheme for Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation, video conferencing for depositing testimonies of victims, child friendly courts and appointment of panel lawyers/PLVs for assisting victims of trafficking. Helen R Sekar, Senior Fellow, VV Giri National Labour Institute and National Human Rights Commission, also took part.