



File No. R-18/15/2020-PRPP (RU-3)

31st January, 2022

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India is mandated by the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, to protect and promote the human rights of all the citizens in the country.

2. The NHRC notes with deep concern that the country is now experiencing a third major wave of the Covid 19 pandemic and new variants like Omicron. With a view to ensure protection of human rights of the people, especially the marginalised and vulnerable sections of the population, NHRC issued two sets of detailed "**Advisories on Right to Health in the context of Covid-19**" on 28.09.2020 and 04.05.2021. All recommendations made in these advisories remain relevant.

3. To supplement the recommendations made in the earlier advisories, the NHRC makes the following additional recommendations:

(i) **Achieving the optimum level of vaccination coverage:** The Union and the State Governments should endeavour to achieve optimum level of vaccination coverage for persons above 15 years of age by launching awareness campaigns through print, electronic and social media by involving community leaders, civil society organizations and health experts to clear myths and misconceptions relating to vaccine hesitancy and counseling of persons not willing to undergo vaccination.

(ii) **Prevention of malpractices in Covid-19 testing:** Instances of obtaining/using fabricated Covid-19 negative reports to circumvent the restrictions imposed by the Union and the State Governments on movement of Covid-19 positive persons and also to avoid mandatory quarantine for Covid-19 positive persons have been reported. Similarly, instances of using fabricated covid-19 positive reports to avoid attending office or some additional assignments such as election duty have also been reported. The State Government should take effective measures to prevent such malpractices

(iii) **Regulation of radiological examination and treatment related to Covid:** To prevent and minimize harmful side-effects of unnecessary and avoidable exposure to harmful radiations, the Union and State Governments should ensure that radiological examination of the patients is undertaken only when it is actually required. Similarly, unnecessary or irrational use of Covid-19 related medications must be avoided. In this regard standard treatment guidelines and algorithms issued by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and recognized medical bodies must be rigorously followed by all private and public sector hospitals.

(iv) **Adherence to the Standard Operating Procedure for Covid-19 treatment to prevent and minimise treatment induced health complications:** The State Government should ensure adherence to the Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) prescribed by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for treatment of Covid-19 to prevent and minimise chances of treatment induced health complications. Unnecessary or irrational treatments which may contribute to such complications must be checked, by ensuring compliance of standard guidelines for COVID-19 treatment.

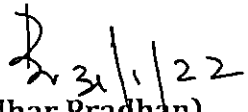
(v) **Prevention, minimization and management of post-Covid sequelae:** The Union and the State Governments should ensure adherence to the official guidelines to prevent, minimise and manage post-Covid sequelae by public and private sector health care providers. The Union and State Governments should provide required medical assistance to persons suffering from post-Covid sequelae.

(vi) **Dissemination of authenticated public information in the context of Covid:** The Union and State Governments should ensure that correct and authenticated information relating to the Covid-19 pandemic is available in all healthcare facilities and to the general public. The Union and State Governments should also take appropriate preventive, corrective and punitive measure to prevent circulation of false and non-authenticated information relating to the Covid-19.

(vii) **Adherence to Patients rights and responsibilities :** Each Covid hospital or Covid Care Centre, both public as well as private, must prominently display the ***Set of Patients' rights and responsibilities*** which was communicated by the Secretary, Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to all States and Union territories vide a D.O. No. Z.28015/09/2018-MH-11/MS dated 2nd June, 2019. A copy of the same was a part of the NHRC's first advisory on 'Right to Health in the context of Covid-19' issued on 28.09.2020.

(viii) **Way Forward:** The pandemic situation should act as an opportunity to learn important lessons for management of such pandemics in future and so as to expand public health infrastructure and facilities in rural and urban areas.

4. All the concerned authorities of the Union/State Government(s)/UTs are advised to implement the recommendations made in the Advisories and to submit the action taken report (ATR) within four weeks for information of the Commission.


(Bimbadhar Pradhan)

1. **The Secretary to the Government of India**
M/o Health and family welfare
D/o Health and family welfare
Nirman Bhawan, C-wing
New Delhi 110001
2. **Chief Secretary / Administrators (All States/UTs)**