

How is training for COVID-19 vaccination activities being done?

New Delhi, Jan 28 (India Science Wire): Training of healthcare workers for COVID-19 vaccination drive is a major task that the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has taken up with the help of other ministries. For this like any other new vaccination program healthcare providers are responsible for handling and administering the vaccine as well as be a major source of information for the community.

Health-care personnel including state and district programme managers, medical officers (MOs), vaccinator officers and alternate vaccinator officers, Information Education and Communication (IEC) officer, cold chain handlers, supervisors, data managers, Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) coordinators, MahilaArogyaSamitis, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and other frontline health workers from health and line ministries are engaged through cascaded trainings. Earlier, the Union Health Ministry has written to states, directing them to prepare protocol to train private vaccinators to administer shots once a vaccine is available.

The vaccination plan also says that in case of shortage, alternate vaccinators may be arranged from recently retired staff, medical and nursing colleges, private hospitals and other organizations like Defense, Railways, and Employee State Insurance (ESI) etc. Separate training sessions have been organized for ASHAs, Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), MahilaArogyaSamitis and volunteers for effective community mobilization. The officials and staff of the Department of Women and Child Development have also been oriented for it.

The various categories of staff have been deployed at the COVID-19 vaccination site. They will be trained as per their roles. At the initial stage vaccination officers have been deployed to check registration status of beneficiary and photo ID verification before entering the waiting room/area (Police, home, guard, Civil defense, National Cadet Corps (NCC), National Service Scheme (NSS). The next level will have vaccination officers to Authenticate / verify document in the Co-WIN system (Health / Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) / other government department e.g. election model). The last stage of vaccination officer is responsible for vaccination of beneficiary, recording and reporting and provides key messages.

All these activities are supervised under a Supervisor, who is responsible to supervise 3-5 vaccination sites. He will also be responsible to ensure adequate availability of vaccine and logistics and ensure timely reporting of coverage and other data. In addition, plans are there to orient the faculty of Preventive and Social Medicine departments in medical colleges as well as professional bodies such as Indian Medical Association, Indian Academy of Pediatrics, Indian Public Health Association (IPHA), Trained Nurses Association of India (TNAI) etc. involved in immunization service delivery.

All training sessions are interactive and are used for the adult learning methodologies such as PowerPoint presentations, instructive videos, role plays, exercises and interactive discussions. Recent trainings of health workforce on infection prevention and control and modalities for sustaining immunization coverage during COVID-19 pandemic across the country were undertaken using virtual platforms without any major issues in reaching block level programme managers, although some limitation of Information Technology access was observed in training of frontline workers. (India Science Wire)

Keywords- vaccination, COVID-19, training

ISW/JS/ENG/28/01/2021