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DMAI urges govt to have a strong action plan on NCD policy

Suja Nair Shirodkar, Mumbai Friday, October 07, 2011, 08:00 Hrs [IST]

The Disease Management Association of India (DMAI) has urged the government to enter into public private partnership (PPP) with NGO's and other small scale and medium organisations for successful implementation of the non communicable disease (NCD) policy. It wants the government to frame a strong action plan so that it an be completed effectively.

Recently Union health minister Ghulam Nabi Azad had informed that the government is soon going to launch an NCD policy that will specifically deal with ways to prevent NCDs like diabetes, stroke, cancer and cardiovascular diseases, etc. and its complications so as to reduce its impact on individuals and society.

A policy expert, Rajendra Pratap Gupta who is also the president and director, DMAI informed that the policy is soon to come in as the government has already completed the discussion with the stakeholders on the same in September.

DMAI said that though the Governments take on the NCD Policy which is soon expected to be launched in the country is appreciative, it seems to be lacking the lasting impact as the government's approach on the same is not realistic.

Gupta said that though the Government's commitment to address this issue is commendable, the claims that the government is trying to make is too high. "I have personally given my suggestions for the policy and if steps are taken at proper directions lot can be done in this front. But right now all that the government is trying to do is create hype in this issue, all words and no action. It is imperative for the government to have a decent action plan before going on claiming high stands."

This comes in after the tall claims made by the Union health minister recently at an international gathering where he said that India's target is to screen about 150-200 million people by next March under this pilot project covering 20,000 rural sub-centres and urban slums.

Under the current plan, around ₹2000 crore has been set aside by the government for the NCDs. A source from the industry informed that under the 12th Five Year Plan the government has demanded for around ₹55,000 crore from the planning commission for the same.

"Government must be very careful when announcing plans especially at an international arena since we will be made accountable for it later. How can the Government claim to achieve something like this in an year's time when it does not even have one partnership to boost off to take this ahead," exclaimed Gupta.

He further added that the government's conceptualisation on the NCD policy is very novel but if not handled properly it will lead to mockery of the whole system in front the world. "The Government cannot handle this alone and it needs to involve other stakeholders also into this programme to make it successful. Our suggestion to the government is that it should engage itself till the policy making procedure and for the execution of the same it should let the functions be handed over to private parties like NGO, small and medium scale companies etc."

He further suggested that to ensure that these organisations are undertaking their functions properly the Government should even do special audit on their activities to check for any discrepancies if any. "Only with a solid action plan in hand can we even think of going on fulfilling the claims made by the government. The government must be more reasonable while speaking out and sharing agendas so as to ensure that people take us seriously."

DMAI wants the government to take initiatives on the line of public private partnership (PPP) and move ahead so that India can actually do something constructive in this front than just playing with words.

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