



ALL INDIA BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED RETIRED EXECUTIVES' ASSOCIATION

Central Headquarters

Registered under Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 vide Govt. of NCT Delhi No. S/RS/SW/1161/2014

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No.AIBSNLREA/CHQ/2026/50

Dated: 12th August 2026

To

Smt. Punya Salila Srivastava,
Secretary,
Department of Health & Family Welfare,
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare,
Government of India,
New Delhi.

Subject: Request to extend direct private OPD consultation facility without referral to all CGHS pensioner beneficiaries aged 60 years and above

Madam,

The Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health & Family Welfare, in its 155th Report on functioning of CGHS presented to the Rajya Sabha on 8th February 2024 had recommended that *"the Ministry review the guidelines to bring all CGHS pensioners/beneficiaries aged 60 years and above into the ambit of direct private consultation from empanelled hospitals."*

2. Subsequently the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare issued an O.M on 28.06.2024, revising the referral guidelines, lowering the then existing age of 75 years and above, for which direct consultation without CGHS referral was allowed, down to 70 years and above. Though the said Parliamentary Committee accepted this partial action later, the justifications for its earlier recommendation for lowering it to 60 years and above continue to exist.

3. Government of India's own statistics clearly establish that age-related morbidity rises sharply from 60 years, not 70. The National Sample Survey (NSS) 80th Round, 2025 reports that 13.1% of Indians suffered ailments in a 15-day reference period, compared to 7.5% in 2017–18, with significantly higher reporting among seniors aged 60 years and above. The same survey shows a hospitalisation rate of 8.1% for this age group, almost three times the national average of 2.9% during the last 365 days reference period, demonstrating that individuals aged 60 and above already face substantial health risks requiring timely specialist intervention.

4. Government data also shows that India's disease profile has shifted decisively towards chronic and lifestyle-related illnesses. Conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, thyroid disorders and cardiovascular diseases are now widespread and become dominant after the age of 60. These illnesses require regular specialist monitoring, and delays caused by referral requirements can lead to complications, emergency admissions and higher treatment costs. Allowing direct Specialist OPD access for seniors aged 60 and above will strengthen early detection, reduce avoidable hospitalisations and improve long-term health outcomes.

5. CGHS Wellness Centres currently serve nearly 42 lakh beneficiaries. Allowing pensioners aged 60 and above to directly consult specialists will reduce congestion, shorten queues, and enable Medical Officers at the Wellness Centres to focus on routine care and younger beneficiaries. This will improve the efficiency of the entire system. Pensioners in the 60–69 age group frequently suffer from multiple chronic conditions and mobility limitations; repeated visits for referrals impose avoidable hardship and administrative burden.

6. By lowering the threshold from 75 to 70 years, the CGHS Directorate has already acknowledged that the earlier limit was too high. Extending this relaxation to all CGHS pensioner beneficiaries aged 60 years and above is the logical next step, fully supported by demographic trends, medical evidence, and Government statistics. It is also financially prudent, since early specialist intervention reduces emergency admissions, complications and costly procedures.

7. The above issue was adopted as a resolution of the AIBSNLREA AIC held at Varanasi in March 2026 and has already been submitted to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India for consideration. Extending direct Specialist OPD access to all CGHS pensioner beneficiaries aged 60 and above is essential to ensure timely and efficient healthcare. It will strengthen CGHS, reduce administrative delays and improve the health and dignity of senior citizens who have served the nation.

8. In view of the compelling evidence and the practical benefits to both beneficiaries and CGHS infrastructure, we request the DoH&FW to kindly examine the matter and take an early decision to extend direct private OPD access to all CGHS pensioner beneficiaries aged 60 years and above.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

(R.R. Balasubramanian)
General Secretary

Copy to: 1. Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda,
Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare,
2. Smt. Nivedita Shukla Verma,
Secretary (Pension), DoP&PW