

1. Affordability of health care is a serious problem for the vast majority of the population than the accessibility of that. Has the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna been successful in increasing the affordability of healthcare? Discuss the steps needed for improving it.
(250 words)

Answer:

- Due to low government financing of health and inadequate protection of populations against healthcare costs, nearly 60% of these costs are borne by people out of their pockets. People from the lower socio-economic strata are disproportionately affected due to it. Thus affordability of health care is a serious problem for the vast majority of the population than the accessibility of that.
- The amount of money individuals spent on medical treatment totaled to around Rs 3 lakh crore annually in India, of which only Rs 20,000 crore is through insurance cover. The rest Rs 2.8 lakh crore is spent on medical treatment particularly by the poor and lower middle class through their hard-earned savings or borrowing at high cost or by selling family assets.
- GOI has introduced Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY), India's flagship national health insurance scheme for people living Below the Poverty line (BPL).
- It provides insurance coverage for certain hospitalization expenses and day-care procedures to the BPL population. Under this scheme a BPL family can avail free hospitalization care upto Rs. 30,000 per annum in selected private and public health facilities. A maximum of five members of a family can be covered under the scheme on a floater basis.
- **Issues in the scheme**
 - a) The criterion for inclusion in RSBY is based on a BPL list of people drawn up through various parameters. Due to faulty procedures BPL families have been left out.
 - b) About 79 percent of impoverishment through health service use is a result of outpatient care, which involves several small but frequent payments, and only 21 percent is a result of inpatient care. The benefit package under RSBY is mainly focused on the provision of secondary care. It does not include outpatient visits or the cost of drugs.
 - c) Under the scheme, state governments are responsible for creating effective programs for spreading awareness. However, many states have handed over the function to insurance companies and there is a gap in terms of a clear and effective strategy of information dissemination.
 - d) There are large variations in the quality of healthcare, and both the public and the private sector function without much accountability. The poor are more likely to suffer from this lack of oversight of the quality of care.
 - e) There is significant evidence that health care providers and insurance companies are maximizing profits by gaming the system. Hospitals have engaged in misconduct by

introducing illegitimate charges, making false claims and providing unnecessary treatments, to the point of clear fraudulence.

- **Steps needed**

- a) To improve quality of care, RSBY must better inform and educate beneficiaries and redesign provider incentives.
 - b) The quality of RSBY's claim and enrollment data still needs improvement for better management. To do so, RSBY management must pay greater attention to the institutional arrangements and architecture, human resources, and incentives to ensure continuous improvement even with major leadership changes in RSBY.
- RSBY will need to expand its benefit package to its population to meet evolving demand, all while ensuring smart, efficient, and sustainable public spending.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Answer the following Questions

1. India should not be a party to Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. Examine. (250 words)
2. Discuss the objectives of the Draft National Digital Communications Policy, 2018. Also discuss how it aims to achieve the objective of digital sovereignty. (250 words)