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Maharashtra opens Wellness Hub for holistic sickle cell disease care

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A partnership between Novo Nordisk Education Foundation and Government Medical College and Hospital, Nagpur



Novo Nordisk Education Foundation (NNEF) and Government Medical College and Hospital (GMC), Nagpur have inaugurated the first ‘Sickle Cell Wellness Hub’ in the state of Maharashtra aiming to deliver comprehensive and long-term care for people living with sickle cell disease (SCD).

This public-private partnership, supported by National Alliance of Sickle Cell Organisations (NASCO) as the knowledge partner, is aligned to the Government of India’s commitment of eradicating SCD from India by 2047 as part of its National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission (2023) .

Speaking on the sidelines of the ceremony, Vikrant Shrotriya, Managing Trustee, NNEF said, “Nearly 2 million Indians are estimated to be affected with sickle cell disease. Among them, the tribal communities are the worst affected due to poorer health conditions, high morbidity & mortality and limited access to healthcare services."

The SCD Wellness Hub will offer holistic care for people from economically constrained backgrounds living with the disease in the state of Maharashtra. A host of services shall be provided including timely diagnosis, access to care, constant monitoring, dietary adjustments and counselling for other self-care activities. The hub aims at improving the existing infrastructure for SCD care to make it children-friendly, while strengthening capacity building initiatives among healthcare professionals (HCPs) for better disease management. Additionally, regular educational and awareness camps shall be organised for people living with SCD and various caregivers.

Maharashtra carries the one of the highest SCD burden in India, with Vidarbha being a high-prevalence region, particularly among tribal and socio-economically vulnerable communities. The prevalence of sickle cell carriers in different tribes across Maharashtra varies from 0 to 35%1. According to data published by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, 23,258 people have been identified to be living with SCD basis the ongoing screenings. This underscores the urgent need for structured, accessible, and continuous care models.

The SCD Wellness Hub in Nagpur is expected to improve early diagnosis and continuity of care for patients across the state. It also endeavours to enhance disease awareness and health-seeking behaviour by building capacity of healthcare providers at multiple levels. Additionally, it aims to reduce disease-related complications through better monitoring and adherence and contribute to state and national SCD elimination goals.