Status of NRCs across Chhattisgarh during CoVID-19 emergency

(Status report as on 31st March 2020)

The COVID-19 pandemic is straining health systems worldwide. The rapidly increasing demand on health facilities and health care workers threatens to leave some health systems overstretched and unable to operate effectively. It is urgently required to maintain essential health service delivery, mitigating the risk of system collapse to reorganize and maintain access to high-quality essential health services for all.

Considering all the above factors in mind, a thorough assessment was made of the existing status of services rolled out across Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres in Chhattisgarh, through the existing program of Facility Based management of SAM.

On the basis of the data collected across 87 NRCs across Chhattisgarh, following findings have been noted after thorough analysis of the data received: -

Out of total 87 of NRC' approached, 24 are currently functional, 41 closed down due to COVID-19 outbreak, 21 not responding and 1 is not functional due to absence of set up. Few of NRCs were converted into isolation units, hence could not be functional and few Feeding Demonstrators and staff Nurses were alternatively placed in Helpdesk and COVID response duties in other hospitals. Hence, taking into account the above reasons, only few NRCs were able to function as required.

It was observed that out of 24 NRCs which were currently functioning on the day of enquiry, only 8 NRCs were functioning with children admitted on the day of enquiry. A total of 43 children were found to be currently admitted in 8 NRC's functioning as on 31st March. Therefore, it can be deduced that the remaining NRCs were open but unable to execute their normal services, due to absence of admitted children. Most NRCs were shut down due to orders of closure from District administration due to COVID 19 lockdown.

A total number of 469 SAM Children admitted in the month of March 2020 among 66 NRC's from which data were collected and 676 number of discharges were made for the above period. Out of 676 children discharged during the month of March, 420(62%) children achieved 15% weight gain. On the contrary, in the last one week after announcement of the lockdown, it was revealed that only four new admissions were made in 2 NRCs, whereas 135 discharges were made within the same span of one week. Most of the discharges were made early due to orders of close down of NRCs issued by District administration complying with the nationwide lockdown. So, most of these children were discharges in less than 15 days. Only few NRCs ensured completion of stipulated period of admission for SAM children.
similarly, on enquiry it was observed that zero new admissions were done yesterday and 29 discharges were done on 30-31 March 2020. This was because some NRCs closed down at the end of March after completion of stipulated period of admission.

A total of 1346 follow-ups were due among 51 NRC's (15 NRC's were not aware about the number of children due for follow up) and it was observed that only 542 children were actually followed up during the month of March 2020. Follow ups were highly impacted due to COVID outbreak and also due to seasonal practices followed in Chhattisgarh.

On being enquired about counselling for COVID related precautions, it was seen that out of 66 NRC's ,44 NRC's responded that they were following COVID-19 related precautions and counselling related to social distancing, hand washing and wearing of mask. Most Feeding demonstrators had not received any training for COVID counselling, and most NRCs did not observe any counselling related to COVID, as they were shut down in the early period of lockdown.

**Actions:**

NHM has issued guidance on COVID-19 for NRCs on 02nd April 2020 and SCoE is following up with NRCs to initiate Follow up of children.