



# Disability Certificate for Sickle Cell Patients

[Source: TH](#)

## Why in News?

A plan to issue **permanent disability certificates for Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) patients** above the age of 5 years has been stuck in a dilemma between three Union Ministries (Health, Social Justice and Empowerment, Tribal Affairs) for nearly three years.

## What Causes Delays in Issuing Permanent Disability Certificates for SCD?

- After SCD was included in the list of disabilities **under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, of 2016**, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) increased the validity of disability certificates for SCD patients **from one year to three years**, but still required a **minimum of 25% disability**.
- The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, which is in charge of setting the **criteria and rules** for the certificates.
- The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment issues the certificates**, while the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs advocates for the rights of SCD patients**.
- The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Empowerment of Women noted that SCD is a "**lifelong illness**" with a **blood and bone marrow transplant** being the only cure, "which very few people, especially among the tribal population, can undertake."
  - They urged the government to expedite the process of issuing permanent or longer-term certificates for SCD patients.
- The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** is expected to release a report on the issue by October 2023.

## What is Sickle Cell Disease (SCD)?

- **About:**
  - SCD is a group of inherited **red blood cell disorders**. In SCD, the red blood cells become hard and sticky and look like a **C-shaped farm tool called a "sickle."**
- **Symptoms:**
  - Symptoms of sickle cell disease can vary, but some common symptoms include:
    - **Chronic Anaemia:** leading to fatigue, weakness, and paleness.
    - **Painful episodes** (also known as sickle cell crisis): these can cause sudden and intense pain in the bones, chest, back, arms, and legs.
    - **Delayed growth and puberty**
- **Treatment:**
  - **Blood Transfusions:** These can help relieve anaemia and reduce the **risk of pain crises**.
  - **Hydroxyurea:** This is a medication that can help **reduce the frequency of painful episodes** and prevent some of the long-term complications of the disease.
  - It can also be treated by **bone marrow or stem cell transplantation**
- **Government Initiatives to Tackle SCD:**
  - The **National Sickle Cell Anemia Eradication Mission** aims to eliminate sickle cell anemia from **India by 2047**.
  - The government released technical operational guidelines for the **prevention and control**

of sickle cell anaemia in 2016.

- Integrated centres have also been established in **22 tribal districts for treatment and diagnosis**.
- The [State Haemoglobinopathy Mission](#) has been established in **Madhya Pradesh** to address the challenges in screening and management of the disease.
- [Anaemin Mukh Bharat Strategy](#).

## UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### Prelims

**Q. Consider the following statements in the context interventions being undertaken under Anaemin Mukh Bharat Strategy :**

1. It provides prophylactic calcium supplementation for pre-school children, adolescents and pregnant women.
2. It runs a campaign for delayed cord clamping at the time of child-birth.
3. It provides for periodic deworming to children and adolescents.
4. It addresses non-nutritional causes of anaemia in endemic pockets with special focus on malaria, hemoglobinopathies and fluorosis.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

**Ans: (c)**

**Exp:**

### **Interventions of Anaemia Mukh Bharat:**

- Not Prophylactic calcium supplementation but **Prophylactic Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation** is provided to children, adolescents and women of reproductive age and pregnant women irrespective of anemia. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- Appropriate Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) with emphasis on adequate and age-appropriate complementary foods for children 6 months and above.
- Increase intake of iron-rich, protein-rich and vitamin C-rich foods through dietary diversification/quantity/frequency and food fortification
- **Promoting practice of delayed cord clamping** (by at least 3 minutes or until cord pulsations cease) in all health facility deliveries followed by early initiation of breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **Bi-annual mass deworming for children in the age groups between 1-19 years** is carried out every year under National Deworming Day (NDD) programme. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
  - The Anemia Mukh Bharat, also integrates deworming of women of reproductive age and for pregnant women as part of the NDD strategy.
- **Addressing non-nutritional causes of anemia in endemic pockets**, with special focus on malaria, haemoglobinopathies and fluorosis.
- **Hence, statement 4 is correct.**

