

Principles for use of untied funds of Sub Health Centre (SHC) level Health and Wellness Centre (HWC)

I. Background

Under Ayushman Bharat (AB), Health and Wellness Centres are being created by transforming existing Sub Health Centres (SHCs) and Primary Health Centres (PHCs) to provide comprehensive primary health care for an expanded range of services, spanning preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative care. HWCs are expected to play role in public health and support collective community action on Social Determinants of Health, as well as undertake Social Audits. These transformed SHC - HWCs, will receive Rs. 50,000 as untied fund (an amount of Rs. 20,000 is provided presently to all SHCs). Jan Arogya Samiti (JAS), an institutional platform for management and oversight of the HWCs, drawn from elected representatives, community members and service providers, will play a key role in management of the untied fund.

II. Principles

1. The purpose of the untied fund is to make available a flexible fund, to cater to unanticipated minor requirements, based on decisions taken at the HWC level, in consultation with JAS.
2. Ensuring basic amenities and services to the patients and citizens and supporting community level health promotion are two cornerstones for prioritizing expenditures from untied funds. The fundamental principle that should be adhered to, is, that the expenditure must be made based on the local needs and priorities, with local level decision making.
3. Untied Funds should be used only for the common good and not for individual needs, except in the case of referral and transport in emergency situations. In extraordinary cases of a destitute woman or very poor household, small amounts can be used to provide for their health care needs.
4. For routine and regular requirements, such as for HWC maintenance / equipment / drugs and diagnostics, the untied fund should be used only in case of disruptions in regular supplies, after consultation with the PHC MO.
5. Health Promotion is a key function of HWC, and untied funds could be used for activities related to Health Promotion and Action on Social Determinants of Health. The principle to be followed is to spend on activities to initiate and support a sustainable process of

Health Promotion, Lifestyle Change, and Preventive Health practices. Illustrative activities, in which untied fund can be used for small gap filling expenses include:

- Development of common spaces for physical exercises, walking area.
 - Gap filling for activities such as building open-air gym / exercise equipment / indoor gym, with low cost equipment.
 - Promoting physical activity and sports through developing Volleyball Court / Football Field (depending upon the availability of space), and purchase of equipment for these sports. These are among the most popular community level sports and need only small resources.
 - Expenditure (up to a maximum defined amount like, Rs. 500/- per meeting) can be made for organisation of the monthly JAS meetings.
 - Urgent requirements of stationery, printing of formats, related to population enumeration.
 - Expenses related to cleaning of the SHC – HWC premises.
6. The States/UTs should ensure that an optimum balance is maintained between different categories of expenditure permissible from untied funds. For example, it will be useful to keep an optimum balance between different categories of expenditure like, a) Upkeep of SHC- HWC premises, b) Patient Amenities, and c) SHC-HWC Infrastructure Maintenance. States can decide to fix a ceiling of 20% for each of these expenditure categories, but they have the flexibility as per the local context.
7. The state and district level authorities should avoid giving directions regarding on which all items untied fund (or a part of it) needs to be spent on Within the broader principles for use of untied funds, the decisions related to the priorities and expenditure should be taken at the local level, in the meetings of JAS.
8. All payments from untied funds, should be made through cheque / draft / electronic bank transfer (except the expenses made from emergency funds). All efforts should be made for ensuring transparency and accountability in decision-making and financial management.
9. An annual report of the activities undertaken and expenditures made from the untied fund, has to be presented in the JAS meeting of the last month of every financial year.

Subsequently this annual report will have to be presented in the Annual Social Audit of the HWC.

10. An amount of up to Rs. 2000, can be kept by the Member Secretary for expenses on emergency requirements. The restriction of not making cash payment beyond Rs. 500, will not apply to the expenses from this fund.

Negative List for Untied Fund – Items / Expenditures not to be purchased from Untied Fund

- expenses related to regular maintenance services, for which a fund or budget is available
- purchase of drugs, and reagents and equipment related to diagnostics tests
- The funds should not be spent on items or activities for which resources and provisions already exist in different programmes of the state/UT government.
- No cash payment beyond Rs. 500 can be made for any purchases, to any agency / vendor.