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New Delhi, 25th April 2023

To,
Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya
Hon'ble Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare
Room No. 348, 'A' Wing, Nirman Bhavan
New Delhi-110011

Subject: Extreme Weather Outdoor-Occupational Health Guideline (EW-OHG)

*Respected Sir,
Namaste*

The scorching heat of April and the coming months has already become a cause of worry for the people of India. While February and March saw record-setting temperatures, deaths have been reported even when the temperatures were not skyrocketing. The impact of heat waves is so severe that nearly 90% of India is in the "danger zone." This condition is expected to aggravate. Killer heatwaves are putting unprecedented burdens on India's agriculture, economy, and public health, endangering the earning capacity of every Indian.

The most affected groups of these killer heatwaves are not just the elderly or children; it is also the working age group, especially manual workers, streetside vendors, and daily wage earners who step out every day and work non-stop without appropriate clothing or shelter. In this context, it is essential to set our priorities right and tackle this emerging public health challenge before it takes millions of lives.

As a leading Public Policy Think-Tank, Health Parliament proposes to the government to come up with an Extreme Weather Outdoor-Occupational Health Guideline (EW-OHG). This guideline should include:

1. Multilingual awareness campaign, including print and visual media, to educate people on how to identify symptoms of heat-related illnesses (such as heat rash, heat syncope, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke) and what actions to take.
2. Provision of temporary shelter for outdoor workers to rest during peak heat hours.
3. Provision of ORS (guide people on preparing ORS at home or other homemade traditional remedies), water, refreshments, and cooling pads at the temporary shelters.
4. Disincentivize employers from scheduling physically exhausting work during peak heat hours.
5. Free or subsidized distribution of traditional Indian cool drinks and ORS to outdoor workers.
6. Dedicated wards in hospitals for patients with heat stroke and those with worsening conditions from home management.
7. Increase the availability of ambulance services.
8. Dos and Don'ts of summer-appropriate clothing.

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9. Standard operating procedures (SOPs) for all healthcare professionals and clinical establishments.
10. Self-management and treatment in a home-based setting.
11. How to avoid exposure to heat during movement/travel.
12. Roping in influencers for sharing the messages.
13. Multi-stakeholder coalition to implement the EW-OHG.
14. National helpline number to assist patients in recognizing symptoms and seeking treatment when necessary.

EW-OHG will not only help reduce the impact of heat waves on public health but also provide a framework to tackle other occupational health challenges.

It is crucial to take action at the right time to avoid this catastrophe before it starts affecting us. Health Parliament remains committed to supporting the government and other stakeholders in implementing these guidelines and ensuring the well-being of every citizen. We are at your disposal for any further details, clarification, and support.

About us: Health Parliament is a think tank that works in evidence-based policy, advocacy, and leadership development. Our philosophy is 'Real Work. Great Leaders. Right Policies'. The government has accepted some of the key recommendations made in our reports. We created the first institutionalized **Healthcare Leadership -Fellowship Program** to create the leaders for tomorrow. Under **Healthcare Guideline Developing Group**, we drafted the first holistic **Women's Health Guideline** with a lifecycle approach to move beyond the reproductive cycle approach and **Body Art Practice Guideline**. Our work in guidelines can be reviewed at www.parliament.health

With best regards

Dr. Rajendra Pratap Gupta
Founder
Health Parliament

CC:

Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare
Director General – ICMR
DGHS, MoHFW, GoI
Health Minister of States

Enclosed: Women's Health Guideline

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