

2. Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS)

Why in News?

- The Health Ministry has recently announced that it has revised the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) package rates for all CGHS beneficiaries and simplified the referral process under CGHS for the benefit of its employees by offering a video call facility.

Highlights

- The Central government has increased the CGHS rates of consultation fee for out-patient department (OPD)/in-patient department (IPD) to ₹350 from ₹150. Similarly, ICU charges have been revised to ₹5,400.
- The revision of CGHS package rates, including the increase in consultation fees, ICU charges, and room rent, is likely to result in increased healthcare costs for beneficiaries. While the revised rates are aimed at covering the rising costs of healthcare services, the move may affect the affordability of healthcare for some
- CGHS is a comprehensive healthcare scheme provided by the Central Government to its employees, pensioners, and their dependents.
- It was established in 1954 with the aim of providing quality healthcare services to government employees and their families
- Outpatient department (OPD) treatment at its wellness centres, which includes the issuance of medicines
- Specialist consultation at polyclinics, government hospitals, and CGHS enrolled hospitals with a referral from CGHS
- OPD and inpatient treatment at government and enrolled hospitals with cashless treatment facilities for pensioners and identified beneficiaries in impanelled hospitals and diagnostic centres. Reimbursement for treatment expenses incurred in government or private hospitals in case of an emergency.
- Reimbursement for expenses incurred for the purchase of hearing aids, artificial limbs, and appliances after obtaining permission
- Maternity and child health services, family welfare, and medical consultation
- Dispensing of medicines in Ayurveda, Homeopathy, Unani, and Siddha system of medicines (AYUSH)
- Presently approximately 42 lakh beneficiaries are covered by CGHS in 79 cities all over India and the endeavor is to include more cities to improve the accessibility of the services.