

# Make health services people-oriented: CM

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Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today underscored the need for improvement in the health infrastructure as well as making the services people-oriented.

Inaugurating a three-day national workshop organised by the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), the Chief Minister said that community health services should also be strengthened. The State Government has already initiated steps to achieve these goals, he said.

Naveen said that delivery of health services has improved in the State as has been witnessed from the drop in the infant mortality rate to 71 per 1,000 births. Similarly, the State has also brought down the maternal mortality rate (MMR) from 358 to 303 per one lakh child birth, he said.

While institutional delivery has increased from 39 per cent to 72 per cent, in the field of immunisation the State has achieved 74 per cent success, he said.

Stating that taking health services to inaccessible rural pockets is a priority area for the Government, Naveen said that 36,000 'Asha karmis' have been engaged while 40,000 'rogi

kalyan samities' have been constituted.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Prasanna Acharya said that the State Government is developing an 'equity strategy' in health care services. The goal is to extend minimum health care facility to each one of the villages irrespective of geographical and topographical differences, he said, adding that there are apparent limitations which block the implementation of the concept.

Listing the limitations, the Minister said that shortage of manpower at all levels especially doctors and nurses is a major problem in delivery of health care. Besides, slow progress in creating health infrastructure and delay in procurement of drugs and equipment also pose problem.

Acharya said that the State Government has taken several reforms and restructuring measures to mitigate the shortcomings and to address the emerging challenges. He said that the State Government is actively considering to grant autonomy to the existing medical colleges and establish more medical colleges on PPP mode.

Besides, a refined procurement policy and entity for drugs and equipment will be formulated, he said.