

# CDSCO moves to address drug blind spot for visually impaired patients

The apex regulator has notified several recommendations made by a sub-committee formed in response to multiple representations highlighting the difficulties visually impaired patients face in reading drug names and expiry dates. These proposals are now open for public comment



New Delhi: Taking a progressing step towards ensuring the ease of medicine usage, India's apex regulator has brought several suggestions in drug labels aimed at helping blind or visually impaired patients

who struggle to read conventional packaging.

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) regulator had received several representations over the difficulty in reading drug names, expiry date by visually impaired patients and following that the matter was examined by a sub-committee which had proposed several recommendations.

Seeking public comments on the matter, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) Dr Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi has issued a public notice outlining the recommendations including additional labeling in braille language, secondary packaging for such patient groups.

The proposals also include increasing the currently mandated font size, spacing, ensuring the availability of an information leaflet on request under an appropriate format, QR Code with a linked voice assistance, among several others.

However, various recommendations outlined in the notice will not be applicable for the products administered under supervision of health care professionals such as. Injectable, Vaccine etc.

The central regulatory body has issued the notice based on the recommendation of the 66th Drug Consultative Committee (DCC) meeting—the highest internal advisory body—which called for putting the proposals made by the sub committee on the CDSCO website to obtain public comments.

Medicine usage has been a long challenge for visually impaired patients, further complicated by look-alike, sound-alike (LASA) drugs, which make it even harder to choose the correct therapy.

Secondly, while a QR code mandate exists for the top 300 drug brands, it is designed to undercut counterfeits, increasing monitoring rather than easing medicine dispensation.

The recommendations also overlooks the category of prefilled pens---a type of injectable used for diabetes, weight-loss drug administration-- which does not require secondary assistance including from a healthcare professional.

### **News Source:**

<https://pharma.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/policy-and-regulations/cdscos-new-drug-label-recommendations-to-aid-visually-impaired-patients/123788879>