

West Bengal: Health and Budgets – A Fact Sheet

2018

The health indicators in West Bengal present an optimistic picture, with all the key indicators doing better than the national levels. However, the budgets for health in the State acquire a smaller proportion of the total budget than other sectors and it appears that the Government is not prioritising allocations for health. The per capita expenditure on MNCH interventions is also on the lower side.

Important Health Indicators – Comparison with the National Average

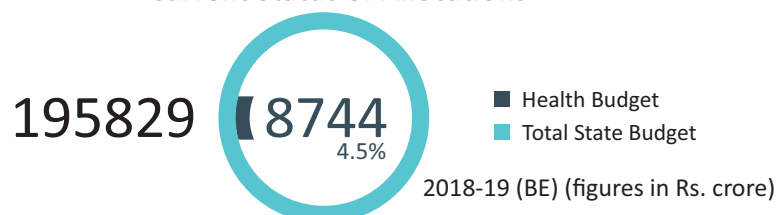
	West Bengal	India
MMR (per 100,000 live births)	101	130
IMR (per 1000 live births)	25	34
Under-5 Mortality (per 1000 live births)	27	39
TFR (2.5 births per woman)	1.6	2.3

Source: Sample Registration System.

West Bengal fares better in all the indicators as compared to the national average. The MMR, IMR, TFR and Under 5 Mortality are all lower than the national figures.

West Bengal is one of the better States as far as the health indicators are concerned.

Current Status of Allocations



In the light of the 14th Finance Commission recommendations, which have changed the federal-fiscal architecture in India, the sectoral prioritisation of West Bengal State Budget (during 14th FC period over 2014-15) is as follows

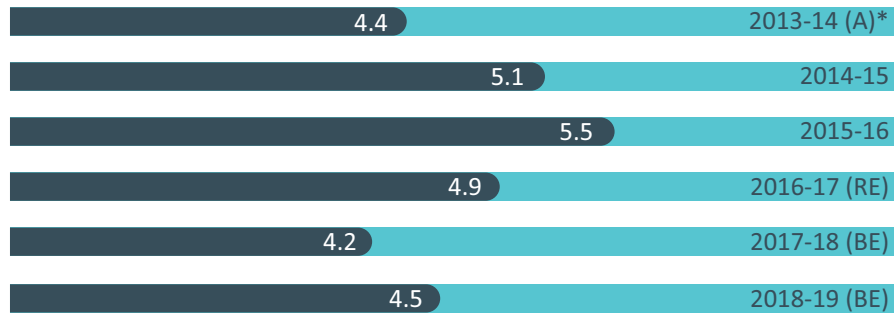
Growth of allocation for Major Sectors during 14th FC period over 2014-15

381	Cooperation and Food & Civil Supplies
129	Housing and Urban Development
108	Power and Energy
67	Agriculture and Allied Activities
57	Environment and Forest
38	Irrigation and Water Resources
35	Public Works
33	Total Expenditure
28	Social Welfare
25	Health
24	Rural Development & Panchayati Raj
23	Education

Note: Growth rates have been computed by taking average values (Average of 2015-16 Actual, 2016-17 Revised Estimates (RE) and 2017-18 Budget Estimates over 2014-15 Actual).
Source: State Health Budget documents, various years.

Health gets a lower priority in the post 14th Finance Commission phase in West Bengal. The increase in the health budgets during this period is 25 percent.

Health Budget as % of Total State Budget



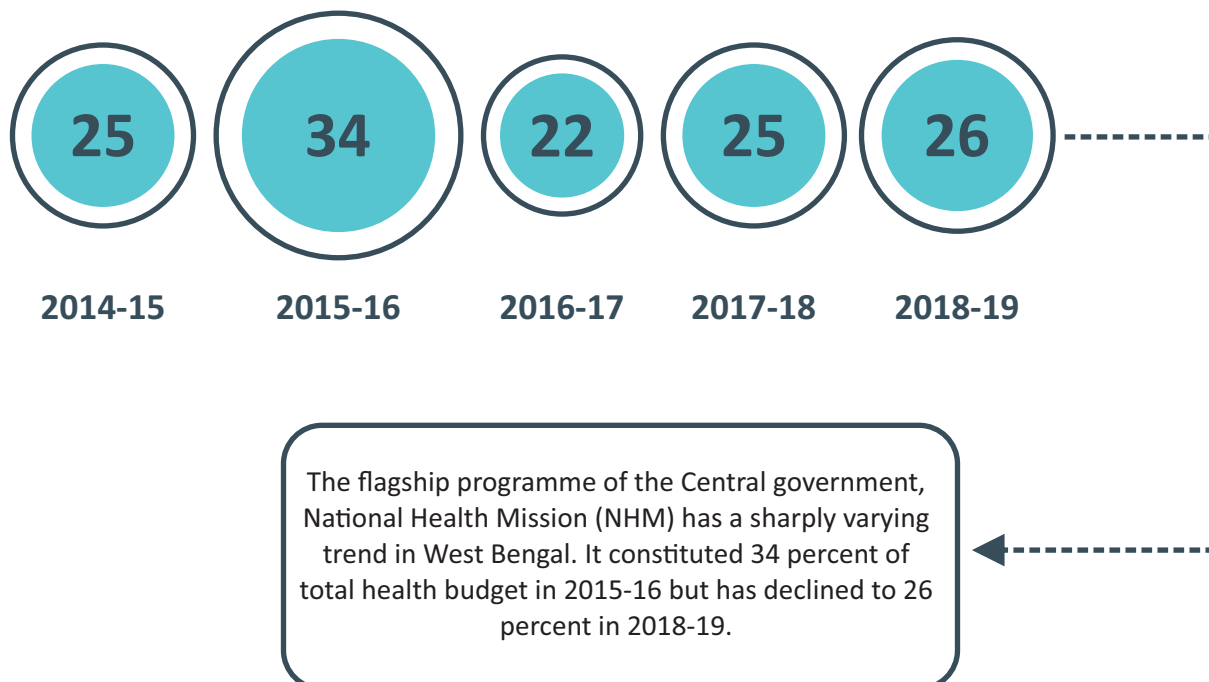
Note: (BE) – Budget Estimate; (RE) – Revised Estimate

* Till 2013-14, the funds were bypassing the State budget and directly going to State Health Societies. Since 2014-15, the State treasury transfers funds to State Health Societies.

Source: State Health Budget documents, various years.

A comparison of 2014-15 (Actuals) and 2018-19 (BE) indicates that health as a proportion of total State budget has decreased from 5.1 percent to 4.5 percent.

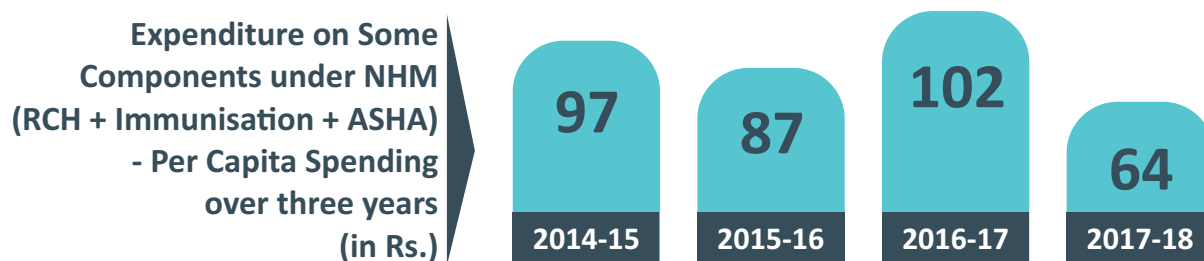
NHM as % of State's Health Budget



Source: Record of Proceeding (RoP), various years.

West Bengal:

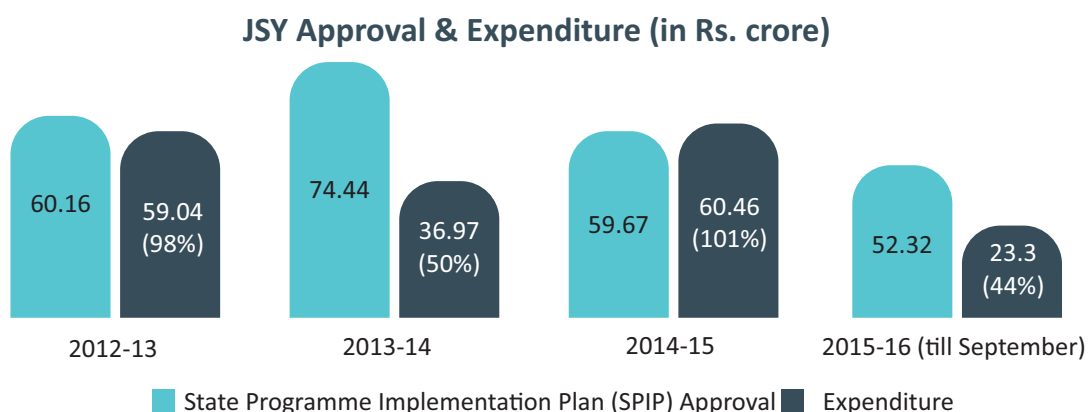
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Source: Record of Proceedings (RoPs), various years.

The per capita allocations for the aggregate of select MNCH interventions are rather low in West Bengal. Given such low per capita investment, as also the overall less prioritisation of health sector, does show a need to step up the public investment in health. Despite this a better record at many development indicators may be a reflection of better utilisation of services.

West Bengal is among the better performing States and falls under the low priority States as far as allocations for Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) are concerned.

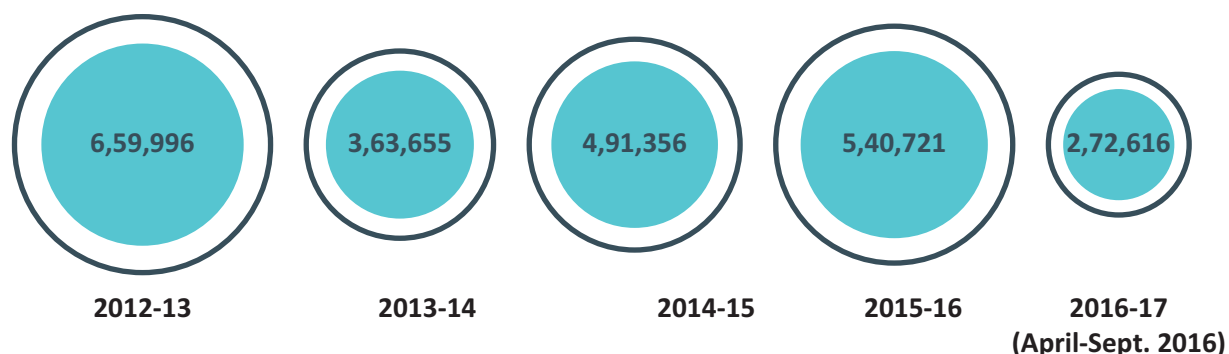


Note: Figures in parentheses represent utilisation.

Source: Data from State PIPs and ROPs.

One of the primary interventions to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality by promoting institutional delivery among poor pregnant women under NHM is the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY). The utilisation under JSY has largely remained well around 100 percent in West Bengal. This is reflected in the better outcomes for maternal health in terms of low MMR.

Number of Beneficiaries under Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY)



Source: Record of Proceedings (RoPs), various years.

However, there is a sharp decline of 18 percent in number JSY beneficiaries between 2012-13 and 2015-16. This may reflect that are problems with the uptake of institutional deliveries, which may be due a number of factors like distance of medical facility from home, lack of proper infrastructure and human resources at the health facilities, bad treatment at the hand of healthcare staff or a general preference towards home deliveries.

Status of Infrastructure – Select Indicators

	Sub Centres				Primary Health Centres				
	With ANM living in the SC Quarter	Without regular water supply	Without regular electricity	Without All-weather Motorable Approach Road	With Labour Room	With Operation Theatre	Without regular electricity	Without regular water supply	Without All-weather Motorable Approach Road
West Bengal	7.7	6.6	22.1	10.1	50.6	11.8	4.8	2.3	16.1
All India	59.3	16.6	24.7	9.9	67.6	36.9	3.2	5.1	8.9

Source: Rural Health Statistics (RHS, 2018).

Status of Human Resources – Select Indicators

	Obstetricians & Gynaecologists at CHCs Shortfall %	Doctors at PHCs Shortfall %	Scs Without Both HW (M & F) (%)	Scs Without HW (F)/ ANM (%)	Nursing staff at PHCs & CHCs Shortfall %	Total specialists at CHCs (Surgeons, OB&GY, Physicians, Paediatricians) Shortfall %
West Bengal	83	*	0.2	0.8	*	91
All India	75	14	3	5	13	82

Source: Rural Health Statistics (RHS, 2018).

As in other States, West Bengal too faces the shortage of human resources and infrastructure. However, in terms of select infrastructure and human resources indicators, West Bengal fares better than other States. A relatively stronger health system may be the reason behind better health outcomes in West Bengal. Nevertheless, given the low per capita State spending there is a case for better allocations and better management of healthcare systems.

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