

CHAPTER I

ORGANISATION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Section-A Introduction

101. True to the ideals of welfare state, the Indian Railways have been pursuing a policy of progressively improving both working and living conditions of staff and providing them with maximum possible amenities in several spheres including medical facilities.

102. Though the Government played the leading part in the development of Railways, there were, till 1947, as many as forty two Railway systems in the country each following a separate policy of its own specially in the matter of medico-social amenities with the result that the medical and health organization had no uniform pattern of development and the level of amenities provided differed widely. The Railway medical services, catered only to routine administrative necessities, viz., medical examination (pre-recruitment and in service) of staff, issue of fit and unfit certificates, check on malingering, etc., while attention to the curative and promotional health care of the railway staff was meagre or absent. Even in this commitment certain facilities available to Group A, B & C employees and their family members were not extended to Group D employees. Again some Railways provided for treatment of employees only, while others provided for the treatment of family members as well.

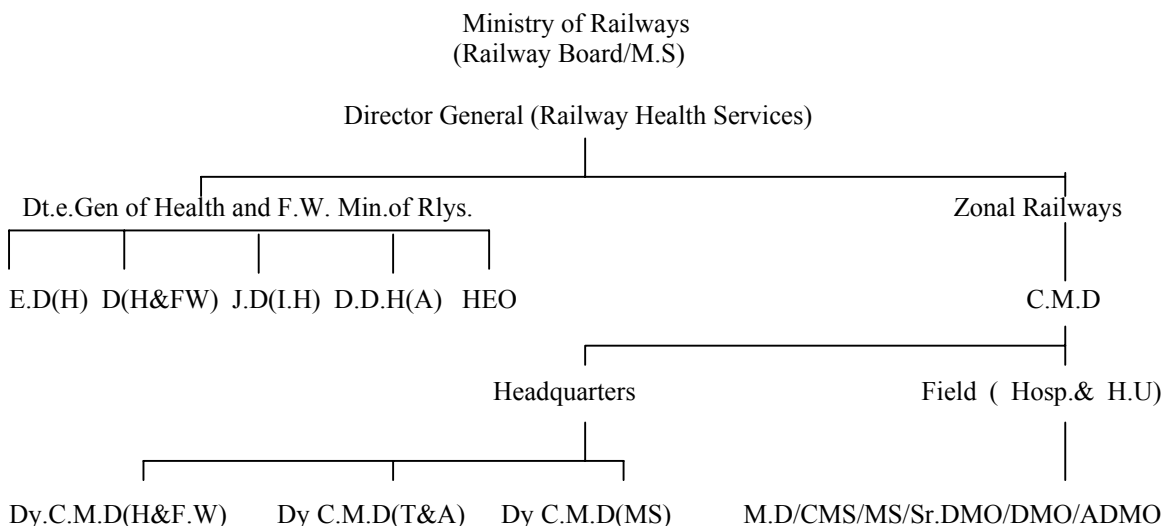
103. In April 1954 Dr. E. Somasekhar, the then Chief Medical Officer, Southern Railway had submitted a detailed scheme on planned expansion of the medical facilities on the Railways.

104. With a view to examine and implement the said scheme, a separate cell was created at the Railway Board in August 1955, headed by an Officer on Special Duty(Medical) which post was later on converted to Joint Director (Medical) and then upgraded to Director, Health. There has been a progressive improvement and expansion of the curative and promotional health services on the Indian Railways since then, resulting in an appreciation from the Kunzru committee (1963) as ' being second to none in the country.'

105. All Zonal Railways have now more or less a uniform level and pattern of medical facilities. The policy in this respect is based on the realisation that the expenditure in this direction would pay dividend in the long run. The output of a contented and healthy worker who is relieved of mental and financial worries on account of his own or some family member's sickness, will be better and more conducive to the efficient running of Railways. This is particularly relevant in the case of running staff who have to be away from their homes most of the time.

Section B-Organisation

106. The administrative set up of the Health Department is given in the following chart -



107. The Indian Railways are subdivided into 60 divisions. The medical facilities are channeled through different units, at different levels, a health unit, being the lowest, under the charge of ADMO/DMO/Sr.DMO and a Central Hospital, the highest, under the charge of Medical Director. There is a large force of para-medical staff(approx. 52,500) manning these units.

Section C-Objectives

108. MISSION STATEMENT : Total Patient Satisfaction Through Humane Approach & Shared Commitment Of Every Single Doctor and Paramedic To Provide Quality Health Care Using Modern & Cost Effective Techniques & Technologies.

To meet the above mission the Health Department on the Indian Railways is committed to :-

- (a) provide quality health* care service;
- (b) constant up gradation of curative services in tune with the latest technologies and within the resources available to Railways.
- (c) provide regular C.M.E (Continuing Medical Education) inputs to medical and paramedical staff.
- d) combine efficiency with courtesy and empathy
- (e) establish effective base for disease prevention and health promotion services including industrial health;
- (f) meet the administrative needs of the Indian Railways;
- (g) work for the acceptance of a small family norm by the staff;
- (h) ensure adequate physical standard of the employees at recruitment and during their periodical check up.
- (i) provide and maintain accident relief medical equipment, including first aid boxes, to give prompt relief to passengers injured in railway accidents;
- (j) attend the passengers injured or taken seriously ill in trains or at Railway stations, on payment, under certain circumstances;
- (k) provide medical facilities at par with serving employees to those retired Railway employees who have opted to become members of the RELHS '97; and
- (l) administer medical treatment to outsiders, on payment, under certain circumstances.

109. Indian Railways Health Services have adopted the modern system of medicine. However the Personnel department arrange the provision of some basic facilities under the Indian system of medicine also, by engaging part time Homeopathic and Ayurvedic doctors and running clinics funded by the Staff Benefit Fund.

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*Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity- W.H.O.