



ESIC की बात आपके साथ - IV

On Ultrasound facility in Manesar Hospital

(Key Findings and Recommendations)



Executive Summary:

To provide feedback on workers' experiences with the availability of Ultrasound facility in ESIC Manesar Hospital, issues faced by them and recommendations, SII has conducted a survey of approximately 70 workers (IPs) from June-December 2022, using a convenience sampling method. Findings of this survey are as follows:

1. More than 85% of the IPs got their ultrasound done from private hospitals due to absence of an 'in-house ultrasound facility' in ESIC hospital, Manesar.
2. None of these 85% respondents (IPs) received reimbursement for the out-of-pocket expenditure they had to incur on the ultrasound in the private hospital.
3. 'Lack of knowledge about ESIC's reimbursement benefits' was the most important reason that people did not claim reimbursement, other important reasons being 'difficulty in process of claiming the reimbursement' and 'lack of clear information about the amount of reimbursement'.
4. Average cost per IP for an ultrasound in the private hospital was found to be 1150 Rs, which is almost 10% of the monthly salary of most of these workers.

A simple calculations of cost-implications for workers and ESIC is below:

- Average cost per IP for the ultrasound from a private hospital: Rs 1,100
- No. of ultrasounds recommended every day in ESIC Manesar hospital: approximately 30
- ESIC hospital remains open for 5 days a week.
- Total cost to IPs: Around 80 lakhs per annum.
- Approximate cost of an ultrasound machine: Rs 20 lakhs
- Approximate cost of a radiologist: Approximately Rs 20- 25 lakhs per annum.

While there would be other costs associated with an inhouse ultrasound machine, it would appear that having an in-house ultrasound facility is a win-win situation for both ESIC and IPs, although currently both ESIC and private facilities appears to be saving/making money at the cost of IPs, who are not claiming/not getting full refunds.

SII recommends a functional in-house ultrasound facility in ESIC Manesar hospital, implementation of the IMP scheme for private cashless referrals or restoration of the private cashless referral as it existed before 2019 and no referral to Gurugram/Faridabad hospitals, and a review of status of ultrasound facilities nationally in ESIC hospitals.

A draft of this report was shared with MS ESIC Manesar and SII is grateful for the confirmation on 16th March 2023 that "The matter regarding ultrasound services is under-process with the competent authority". We hope that the machine is made functional soon.

Introduction and background:

In May 2021, Safe In India started doing quarterly surveys and publishing its findings in the form of 'ESIC Ki Baat Aapke Saath' reports to understand service-quality issues faced by Insured Persons (IPs) in availing ESIC benefits and to respond to their needs. Despite providing security net to the total beneficiary population of over 13.16 crores¹ and impressive work it has done over the decades since independence, ESIC lacks in a number of service quality areas. Through the series 'ESIC Ki Baat Aapke Saath' Safe in India Foundation envisions to provide regular feedback on such ESIC services from worker's perspective and its recommendations.

So far it has published three reports on issues viz. "[Awareness about ESIC's Covid-Relief scheme among IPs](#)", "[IPs' experiences with ESIC helpline and with complaint reporting/resolution](#)" and "[IPs' challenges with Life-certificate process](#)".

In this edition of the report SII has assessed workers' experiences with the availability of Ultrasound facility in Manesar Hospital with the aim of suggesting improvements in the identified areas.

Rationale of the study:

Right to healthcare is a Fundamental right under Article 21 of Indian constitution. Public hospitals in general and ESIC hospitals in particular, due to their nature of providing affordable and accessible healthcare to the poor working class, have a huge role to play in developing the healthcare system of the country.

During SII's interaction with workers in ESIC Hospital in Manesar, it has found that the post COVID-19 pandemic 'ultrasound facility' in the hospital has been stopped, reportedly due to unavailability of radiologists and it causes a number of serious issues for the workers who need this facility.

Methodology and Survey Structure:

Primary data was collected from approximately 70 IPs through semi-structured questionnaires with few open-ended questions (questionnaire for which is attached in the appendix) between June- December 2022. The respondents were mainly workers who met team SII in ESIC Manesar hospital, injured workers who came to SII office for assistance and the workers who attended a workshop on safety, conducted by SII, in the community centre, Manesar. These three sites were chosen to collect responses for the survey using a

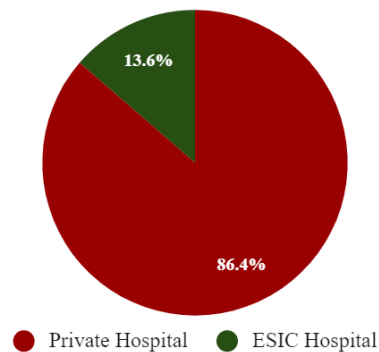
¹<https://esic.gov.in/coverage>

convenience sampling method. The analysis of the data collected from primary sources is done using both qualitative and quantitative methods depending on the nature of the field data and is interpreted through statistical tools.

Survey Findings for ‘Problem of ultrasound in Manesar ESIC hospital’

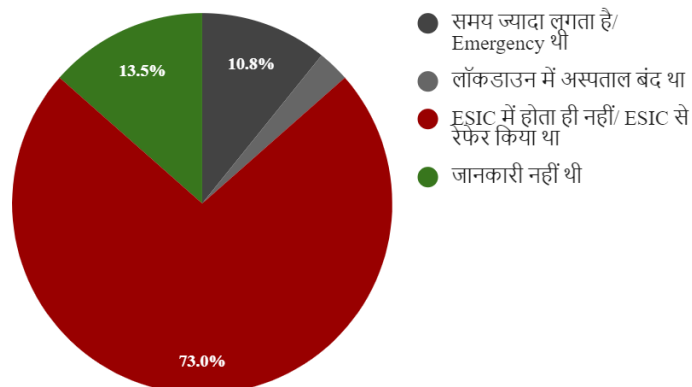
1. More than 85% of the IPs interviewed got their ultrasound done from private hospitals.

आपने अल्ट्रासाउंड कहाँ से करवाया (Where did you get the ultrasound done)?



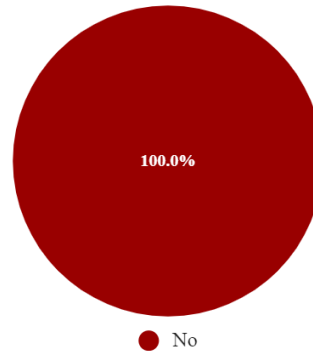
2. ‘ESIC Hospital does not have an ultrasound facility’ was the main reason for most of the people to do it from private hospitals:
 - a. 73% of the IPs did it from private hospitals due to unavailability of ultrasound facilities in ESIC Manesar hospital.
 - b. In addition, 13% of the IPs appear to have decided on taking ultrasound tests themselves/private doctors and did it from private hospitals because they did not know about ESIC’s ultrasound facility.
 - c. In addition, 10% of the IPs did it from private hospitals due to “long waiting time”, even if the facility was available at ESIC hospital before COVID-19 pandemic.

यदि प्राइवेट से करवाया तो क्यों (If done in the private hospital then why) ?



3. None of the respondents (IPs) received reimbursement for the out-of-pocket expenditure they had to incur on the ultrasound in the private hospital.

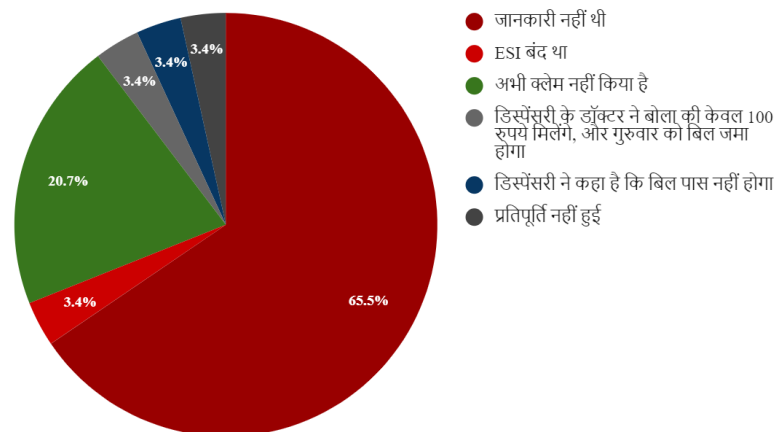
क्या ESIC से प्रतिपूर्ति की (Did ESIC reimburse)?



4. 'Lack of knowledge about ESIC's reimbursement benefits' was the most important reason that people did not claim reimbursement.

- 65% of the IPs did not claim reimbursement because they did not have knowledge about it.
- 20% of the IPs did not claim for other reasons such as 'difficulty in process of claiming the reimbursement' or 'lack of clear information about the amount of reimbursement'.

यदि प्रतिपूर्ति नहीं हुई तो क्यों (If not reimbursed, why)?



5. Average cost per IP for an ultrasound in the private hospital was found to be 1150 Rs, which is almost 10% of the monthly salary of most of these workers.

Just one ultrasound **costs workers more than 10% of their monthly salary** and often more than one ultrasound is required. **Manmohan Bajpayee**, one such worker,

shared a similar story with SII. He had to do two ultrasounds for his son's treatment within a timespan of a month, the first one costed him 3500 Rs and the second one (which had two types of ultrasounds, as informed by him to SII and assumed by it to be true) costed him 6500 rs, which amounts to 10,500 Rs in total. This is a major portion of the monthly salary that he earns through his hard work.

When asked about the reimbursement, he told SII that initially he was finding the process to claim the reimbursement very difficult to understand and has yet not been able to submit all the documents to the dispensary despite having multiple visits. Later on, he found out that only 100 Rs would be reimbursed and perhaps transportation would cost him more than that, so he decided not to submit them. As he himself says,

“मेरे 10,000 रुपये खर्च हुए हैं, और मुझे 100-200 रुपये मिलेंगे। उससे ज्यादा मेरे पैसे खर्च होंगे आने जाने और फोटोकॉपी वेगैरह कारवाने में। क्या करूंगा मैं 100-200 rs लेकर?”
(I have spent 10,000 rupees and will get 100-200 rupees. In fact, more money will be spent on commuting and getting photocopies etc. done. What will I do with 100-200 rs reimbursement?)

He, the sole breadwinner, has a family of four to feed and sustain. So, apart from the financial burdens, the issues due to the absence of an 'in-house ultrasound facility' cause much more humanitarian woes than the ones explicitly visible to us.

6. IPs appear to be funding ESIC savings and private facilities profits

As per the data collected by SII, the average cost per IP for the ultrasound from a private hospital was more than 1100 Rs. SII is aware from multiple conversations with workers and ESIC staff that approximately 30 ultrasounds are recommended everyday by doctors in ESIC Manesar hospital. The cost of ultrasound therefore appears to IPs around eighty lakhs per annum.

A simple calculations of cost-implications for workers and ESIC is below:

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While there would be other costs associated with an inhouse ultrasound machine, it would appear that having an in-house ultrasound facility is a win-win situation for both ESIC and IPs, although currently both ESIC and private facilities appears to be saving/making money at the cost of IPs, who are not claiming/not getting full refunds.

7. **More than 80% of the people who needed ultrasound were women .**

The ultrasound costs are only part of the financial cost on these women. Going to a private hospital for ultrasound and to ESIC hospital for remaining checkups involves a lot of travel, not very convenient for them alone.

Due to our limited capacity, we couldn't probe much deeper into the problem, but these issues certainly add to 'neglect of women's healthcare'. The government has done tremendous work for making access to healthcare easy for women in general and pregnant women in particular, but lack of proper ultrasound facility is the basic necessity, which is lacking in ESIC Manesar hospital and needs immediate attention because of multiple reasons discussed above.

Recommendations:

In view of the above survey findings, SII recommends:

1. Provide an **in-house ultrasound facility** in ESIC Manesar hospital. It already has an ultrasound machine, but due to the absence of a radiologist, the facility is not functional. This will save time and cost for both workers and ESIC.
2. **Referral** should not be made from ESIC Manesar to ESIC Faridabad/Gurugram as they are very far for workers and these hospitals themselves have capacity challenges. Instead ESIC Manesar should also implement the IMP scheme for private cashless referrals or restore the private cashless referral as it existed before 2019, if recommendation (1) cannot be implemented for any reason.
3. Review the status of ultrasound facilities nationally in ESIC hospitals to avoid the same issue as Manesar.

A draft of this report was shared with MS ESIC Manesar and SII is grateful for the confirmation on 16th March 2023 that "The matter regarding ultrasound services is under-process with the competent authority". We hope that the machine is made functional soon.

Annexure

Questionnaire:

1. क्या आप या आपके परिवारजनों को इलाज के दौरान अल्ट्रासाउंड की जरूरत पड़ी है ?
2. यदि हाँ तो आपने कहाँ से करवाया?
3. यदि प्राइवेट से करवाया तो क्यों ?
4. कितने पैसे खर्च हुए ?
5. क्या ESIC से प्रतिपूर्ति (reimburse) की?
6. यदि हाँ, तो कितने पैसे मिले (अमाउंट लिखे)
7. यदि ना तो क्यों ?