



The National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill, 2020

Why in News

Recently, **the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill, 2020** was passed unanimously by the Lok Sabha.

- The Bill seeks to **regulate and standardise the education and practice of allied and healthcare professionals.**
- The group of allied professionals is large and the Bill is **trying to regulate this field by providing dignity to their roles.**

Key Points

▪ Allied Health Professional:

- The Bill **defines an 'allied health professional'** as an associate, technician, or technologist trained to support the diagnosis and treatment of any illness, disease, injury, or impairment.
- Such a professional should have obtained a **diploma or degree.**
 - The duration of the degree/diploma should be at least **2,000 hours (over a period of two to four years).**

▪ Healthcare Professional:

- A **'healthcare professional'** includes a scientist, therapist, or any other professional who studies, advises, researches, supervises, or provides preventive, curative, rehabilitative, therapeutic, or promotional health services.
- Such a professional **should have obtained a degree.**
 - The duration of the degree should be at least **3,600 hours (over a period of three to six years).**

▪ Allied and Healthcare Professions:

- The Bill specifies certain categories of allied and healthcare professions as recognised categories.
- These are mentioned in the Schedule to the Bill and include **life science professionals, trauma and burn care professionals, surgical and anaesthesia related technology professionals, physiotherapists, and nutrition science professionals.**
 - The central government may amend this Schedule after consultation with the **National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Profession.**

▪ National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions: The Bill sets up the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions.

- **Structure:**

- It will consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, five members representing various Departments/Ministries of the central government, one representative from the **Directorate General of Health Services**, three Deputy Directors or Medical Superintendents appointed on a rotational basis from amongst medical institutions and 12 part-time members representing State Councils, among others.
- **Functions:** The Commission will perform the following functions with regard to Allied and Healthcare Professionals:
 - Creating and maintaining an **online Central Register** of all registered professionals.
 - Providing **basic standards** of education, courses, curriculum, staff qualifications, examination, training, maximum fee payable for various categories.
- **Professional Councils:**
 - The Commission will constitute a Professional Council for every recognised category of allied and healthcare professions.
 - The Professional Council will consist of **a president and four to 24 members**, representing each profession in the recognised category.
 - The **Commission may delegate any of its functions to this Council.**
- **State Councils:**
 - Within **six months** from the passage of the Bill, **state governments will constitute State Allied and Healthcare Councils.**
 - It will **complement the functioning of the National Commission** and **maintain a State Register.**
- **Permission for Establishment of Institutions:**
 - **Prior permission of the State Council** will be required to:
 - Establish a new institution.
 - Open new courses, increase the admission capacity, or admit a new batch of students to existing institutions.
 - If such **permission is not sought**, then any qualification granted to a student from such an **institution will not be recognised under the Bill.**
- **Offences and Penalties:**
 - No person is allowed to practice as a qualified allied and healthcare practitioner other than those enrolled in a State Register or the National Register.
 - Any person who contravenes this provision will be punished with a **fine of Rs. 50,000.**

Source:TH

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