

Bengal hospitals refusing swine flu patients: NGO tells Mamata Banerjee

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Kolkata, Feb 28: [NGO](#) People for Better Treatment (PBT) has termed as "unlawful" the refusal to treat swine flu patients by certain hospitals in [West Bengal](#), and said it would move court if the state government fails to meet its demands of ensuring proper treatment for all patients.

The toll due to swine flu in the state has risen to seven with the death of a person at a city hospital, while 12 fresh cases were reported taking the total number of positive cases to 112.



PBT, a registered society fighting for a better healthcare system, expressed concern as "increasing number of patients who are infected with swine flu virus are denied treatment by private and government hospitals in Kolkata and West Bengal".

It submitted a memorandum Feb 25 to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who also holds the health portfolio. The move came in the wake of reports of many city hospitals discharging swine flu patients without proper treatment.

In the submission, the society urged the government to take "responsibility of assuring" treatment for all swine flu patients.

"Proper treatment in isolation unit or ICU with appropriate anti-viral medicines could easily save patients infected with swine flu virus.

"Refusal to treat swine flu patients is unlawful and against the principles of ethical practice of medicine," it noted.

The Bengal government has slapped show cause notice on four hospitals for discharging swine flu patients without treatment. Three of the hospitals are situated in Kolkata. Another one is in the suburbs. The government has also started a probe. State-run hospitals are currently under tremendous strain with many private hospitals refusing to treat patients.

"While private hospitals are refusing to admit swine flu patients for unsubstantiated fear, government hospitals have also failed to provide appropriate medical care resulting in several deaths.

"In fact, the present situation has triggered panic in the minds of ordinary people in West Bengal," said the memorandum signed by PBT president Kunal Saha.

"We request that the government take exemplary punitive action against the hospitals/nursing homes that have refused to treat swine flu patients. The government must also take responsibility to assure treatment for all swine flu patients," it said.

"We also urge that the family of each swine flu patient who died from lack or refusal of medical care by government or private hospitals must be awarded a compensation of Rs.10 lakh for their loss.

"Unless the government accepts our demands, we would be compelled to move the court of law," the submission said.

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