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City researcher's online petition on C-sec' makes an impact



📷 Subarna Ghosh Researcher Subarna Ghosh

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WRITTEN BY



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City-based researcher Subarna Ghosh, whose online petition on the high rate of C-sections has gathered 1.6 lakh signatures, has managed to make an impact. Private hospitals that are a part of the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) will soon be required to declare their rate of C-section deliveries, a move that will improve the quality of maternal health and this is one step in the direction to regulate C-sections, says Ghosh, who is a PhD researcher at the SNDT University. Her online petition on change.org sought that hospitals should be required for hospitals to declare their rate of C-section deliveries.

While the new process for hospitals to be part of CGHS will be in place in a month according to officials, Ghosh wants more. "I would want a blanket policy and a reaction from the health department has not happened yet," she said. Ghosh met Minister for Women and Child Development Manoj Kumar Singh and is consistently following up with the petition.

The latest National Family and Health Survey-4 shows that around 44.8 per cent of the C-section deliveries that take place in the private sector are done via C-section. The figure is a worry because a large number of C-section deliveries are taking place in the private sector in the rural hospitals.

The ideal rate of C-section deliveries according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) is 10-15 per cent. "Vaginal delivery is best for both the mother and the child but a lot of young women opt for C-section through the process," said Dr Rekha Daver, former head of gynaecology department, J. J. Hospital. "It takes as much as nine to ten hours during which you have to observe the patients. Some hospitals might not have that much staff and the doctors to give in when patients' demand a C-section." Doctors say that while the rates can go up to 25 per cent in major public hospitals since they receive a lot of referral cases, rates above that is of concern to the policy makers.

Gynaecologist and author of Dissenting Diagnosis Dr Arun Gadre attributed the high rate of C-sections to the current healthcare system. He blames both the parties for the issue. "While there is a rise in the number of patients who want to choose the date and time of deliveries and pressure on the doctors to perform C-sections, there is also the other side. Medical practitioners find it easier to fleece illiterate patients. Some private doctors also refer patients to each other and C-section procedures earn them more money," he explained.

Susmita Chatterjee, a researcher with the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) has written an article which was published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) in 2013 which looked at the cost of C-sections in the hospitals.

ACCORDING TO WHO

Ideal rate for caesarean sections to be between 10-15 per cent

