

## PRESS NOTE

The United Nurses Association through its Delhi State General Secretary Mr. Joldin Francis filed Application for Intervention & Application for Directions in the Suo Motu Writ Petition No. 7 of 2020, titled, *"In Re: The Proper Treatment Of Covid 19 Patients And Dignified Handling Of Dead Bodies In The Hospitals Etc.* before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

The Applications drafted and filed by Advocate Subhash Chandran KR & Biju P Raman, submits that health care workers are at the front line of the COVID-19 outbreak response and as such are exposed to hazards that put them at risk of infection. Hazards include pathogen exposure, long working hours, psychological distress, fatigue, occupational burnout, stigma, and physical and psychological violence etc. The health and safety (physical / mental) of health care workers are of utmost importance because further shortage of health care workers would result in thousands of unattended COVID-19 patients, which will have serious repercussions including escalation of the present situation and resultant impact on the economy, medical facilities, potential deaths and loss of human resource.

It is also highlighted in the Applications that thousands of health care workers including doctors, nurses from different states are tested

positive for Covid-19. So far as Delhi is concerned approximately more than 1000 health care workers working in different hospitals and clinics have tested positive for Covid-19 and more than 5 health care workers have lost their lives due to COVID 19. A large number of health care workers including nurses, doctors, and other staffers are infected in various states like Delhi, Maharashtra, Gujrat, Tamil Nadu etc. Many Govt. as well as private hospitals are shut down after health care workers tested positive for Covid-19.

Thus, the Intervener, United Nurses Association is inter-alia praying for following directions:

- (a) Direct the Respondents to ensure that Covid-19 protection kits are made available to every single health care professional working in the COVID 19 wards, or who work in close proximity of patients suspected to be infected with the virus;*
- (b) Direct the Respondents to ensure sufficient and standard personal protective equipment(PPE) in COVID 19 hospitals;*
- (c) Direct the Respondents to ensure that adequate and standard nutritious meals are provided to the healthcare workers;*
- (d) Direct the Respondents to ensure that all nurses and other health care staff in Corona wards are provided with proper accommodation in close proximity to the hospitals / health care centres where they are discharging medical duties and functions;*

- (e) Direct the Respondents to ensure that adequate and prompt transport provided to all health care workers deputed in Corona wards;*
- (f) Direct the Respondents to ensure proper screening of suspected patients before entering the hospitals and other medical facilities and also to ensure speedy testing of suspected cases.*
- (g) Direct the Respondents to ensure that all health care workers are trained on infection prevention and control (IPC), proper use and disposal of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) etc.;*
- (h) Direct the Respondents to ensure that the infrastructure of hospitals and health care centers are temporarily expanded so as to provide separate and hygienic washrooms for staff;*
- (i) Direct the Respondents to expand the scope of personal accident cover provided under the 'Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package Health Workers Fighting COVID-19' to include all health care workers across sectors, including those recruited on ad-hoc basis.*
- (j) Direct the Respondents to provide free testing facility and treatment for the health care workers in case of infection of Covid-19 while they are on duty. Families of the health care workers should be taken proper care while they are in quarantine or isolation.*
- (k) Direct the Respondents to ensure the full and timely payment of salaries to the health care workers in the private hospitals.*
- (l) Direct the Respondents to ensure that Private Hospitals are not charging or deducting salaries from the healthcare workers if they get infected Covid-19 while they are on duty.*

(m) *Pass any other or further orders as may be deemed fit and proper in the circumstances of the case.*

14.06.2020  
New Delhi

Joldin Francis  
(General Secretary, UNA, Delhi)