Dear Granadesikan,

Soil transmitted helminths (STH) are a significant public health concern for India. Around 241 million (68%) children are estimated to be at risk of parasitic intestinal worm infestation. Evidences have shown detrimental impact of STH infestation on physical growth – anaemia, undernutrition and cognitive development. Children with the highest intensity STH infections are often too sick or too tired to concentrate at school or attend school at all. High worm load has been proven to adversely affect the attendance in school. Subsequent life outcomes for these children are also considerably impacted due to lower lifetime incomes. Periodic deworming of children together with improvement of water and sanitation, and health education can reduce the transmission of STH infections.

Global experience has shown that launching a high quality mass deworming program to reach children and adolescents at scale could dramatically reduce the harm caused by STH on millions of children in India in a cost effective, simple and safe manner. Thus, with an aim to intensify efforts towards STH control, it has been decided to conduct National Deworming Day (NDD) on 10th February, 2015 (Tuesday) followed by a Mop-Up round on 13th February, 2015 (Friday). As part of Weekly Iron Folic Acid supplementation (WIFS) program, anganwadi workers are already actively providing IFA tablets and Albendazole to out-of school adolescents girls through platform of Anganwadi centers.

Considering the States’ preparedness for effectively conducting the deworming round, it has been decided to begin with National Deworming Day in selected 12 States namely Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Dadar & Nagar Haveli, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Tripura in the first phase.

During the National Deworming Day, all the children of age 1 – 19 years will be provided Albendazole through the platform of school and Anganwadi centers except in identified Lymphatic Filariasis endemic districts.

A detailed NDD Toolkit containing Operational framework, monitoring checklists, FAQs and Factsheets is uploaded on NHM website. Health Department would ensure supply of Albendazole tablets and reporting formats at each Anganwadi center and impart orientation to anganwadi workers and ASHAs. Anganwadi workers alongside ASHA should also be encouraged to address awareness generation prior to 10th February through VHSNC meetings, household visits, Gram Panchayats for dissemination of messages on the benefits of deworming and ensuring Albendazole coverage on the NDD. On the National Deworming Day, anganwadi workers would provide Albendazole to children (1-5 years) and out of school children/adolescents (6-19 years) at the Anganwadi centers on 10th February, 2015 and missed children
would be covered on the Mop-Up day i.e. 13th February, 2015. Reporting formats filled by Anganwadi workers with support of ASHA wherever available, would be submitted to ANMs.

Thus active involvement of both Health and WCD (ICDS) Department is critical to the success and impact of the National Deworming Day.

We jointly request that the State Departments of both Health and WCD (ICDS) collectively converge for effective implementation of National Deworming Day through platform of anganwadi centers. Secretaries and Directors dealing with the subject are requested to oversee the implementation of NDD for health, nutritional and educational benefit for our children.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Lov Verma)

(Yours sincerely,

(Vinay Sheel Oberoi)

Shri K Gnanadesikan,
Chief Secretary
Government of Tamil Nadu
Fort St. George
Chennai – 600009