Dear Chief Secretary,

Soil Transmitted helminths (STH) are significant public health concern for India. Around 68% children of 1-14 years of age (241 million) are estimated to be at risk of parasitic intestinal worm infestation. Evidence has shown detrimental impact of STH infestation on physical growth-anemia, undernutrition and cognitive development as well as school attendance. Periodic deworming can reduce the transmission of STH infections. During 2015, mass deworming was conducted across 11 States as a fixed day strategy to reduce the harm caused by STH on millions of children in India in a cost effective, simple and safe manner. The NDD has resulted in administration of deworming drug to more than 89 million children across these States.

During 2016, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with Ministry of Women and Child Development, Department of School Education and Literacy under Ministry of Human Resource Development, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation and Ministry of Panchayati Raj has decided to conduct annual mass deworming by observing National Deworming Day (NDD) on 10th February, 2016, across the country through schools and anganwadi centres along with intensive awareness generation activities focusing benefits of consuming Albendazole and adopting sanitation-hygiene practices.

A detailed NDD toolkit containing Operational framework, monitoring checklists, FAQs and Factsheets is uploaded on NHM website. Concerted efforts from the three departments at the State, District and Block level are required to ensure effective implementation and increased coverage of the program. We seek your support for the same through active participation of the Departments of Health, School Education and Women and Child Development in the upcoming NDD 2016.

The following steps are suggested to strengthen the coordination amongst the three stakeholder departments for the NDD program:

1. All the key stakeholder departments to coordinate with Department of Health in effective rolling out of NDD.
2. Establishment of State and District level coordination committees to be chaired by the Principal Secretary Health and the District Collector respectively.

3. School Education and Women & Child Development departments to provide the Department of Health with the desired numbers of target age group to cover all children 1-19 years age group, so as to ensure adequate procurement and supply of Albendazole tablets is made available for conducting NDD.

4. All the departments will put National Deworming Day as one of the agenda in their periodic meetings to reinforce key messages for the program and facilitate high coverage.

5. Training of functionaries from Education and WCD Departments to be supported by Health Department at State and District level, while block level training of teachers and anganwadi workers to be led by respective departments.

6. State may issue similar joint directive to the districts for effective rolling out of NDD 2016.

7. All stakeholder departments to disseminate the IEC material provided by the Department of Health to the schools, anganwadis and community as appropriate for increasing program awareness and facilitate greater coverage.

8. Officials of all the stakeholder departments are mandated to undertake field visits for monitoring and supportive supervision on the NDD and mop up day.

9. Reporting formats filled by schools and AWCs to be collected by ANMs from schools and anganwadis within the specified timelines.

We are confident that with your support for the NDD program, we will collectively be able to reach out to all the children in the age group 1-19 years and help improve their quality of life with improved health and educational outcomes.

Looking forward to your support in this regard.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

(B.P. Sharma)  
(S.C. Khuntia)  
(V. Somasundaran)

To

Chief Secretaries of all States/UTs