

Staff shortage in MGMH hospital of Warangal

Warangal: The Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Super Specialty Hospital (MGMH) that serves patients not just from Warangal, Karimnagar and Khammam but also from Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra is in dire straits with severe staff shortage.

Though the hospital claims to provide super speciality services in neurology, nephrology and oncology, among others, none of the super speciality wings have doctors to head the departments and provide service to patients. Similar is the case with cardiothoracic care and gastroenterology departments as well as plastic surgery services. The hospital has a sanctioned strength of 145 doctors with as many as 45 designated to serve in the super speciality wings. However, the current strength of doctors at the hospital is 102, with nearly all the vacancies from the super speciality categories. In addition to the shortage of doctors, the number of para-medical and support staff too, is much below the sanctioned strength of 350 with only 240 staffers working at the hospital in these ranks.

The state of affairs at the hospital is such that the Warangal chapter of the Indian Medical Association is concerned about diagnosis at the hospital in some complicated cases. "The situation is such that if an emergency case comes to any super specialty department, patients are certain that they will not get the right diagnosis," Dr Talla Ravi, a radiologist and president of IMA Warangal chapter, said.

With staff not available to treat patients requiring oncology or gastroenterology care, such patients are being referred either to private hospitals or to Nims in Hyderabad, a retired professor from Kakatiya Medical College said. The MGM Hospital was upgraded in 2005 and the bed strength was increased from 690 to 1,000, with the government setting in motion the upgradation of the hospital to a super speciality status.

About 2,000 outpatients and 500 in-patients, however, continue to get the required treatment from the general medicine and surgery departments as well as from ENT and dental wings. With the orthopaedic department also suffering staff-related issues, it is not uncommon for patients to be referred to private hospitals for better treatment under the Aarogyasri scheme.

However, Dr K Karunakar Reddy, superintendent of the hospital, said that there is adequate staff to meet the requirements of the hospital and that all departments were working hard to help the needy.