

Standing Committee Report Summary

The Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill, 2018

- The Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare (Chairperson: Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav) submitted its report on the Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill, 2018 on January 31, 2020. The Bill seeks to regulate and standardise the education and practice of allied and healthcare professionals. Key observations and recommendations of the Committee are:
 - **Composition of the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Profession:** The Bill sets up the Allied and Healthcare Council to regulate the education and practice of allied and healthcare professionals. The Council consists of 48 members, including: (i) six members (at the level of Joint Secretary) representing various Departments/ Ministries of the central government, and (iii) 12 members representing State Councils. Noting that the Bill aims to regulate 53 different professions, the Committee recommended replacing the Allied and Healthcare Council with the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions. The Commission will consist of 57 members, including: (i) the Chairperson, (ii) 22 ex-officio members, and (iii) 34 part-time members.
 - **Search Committee:** The Standing Committee recommended constitution of a Search Committee for appointment of the Chairperson, part-time members of the Commission, and members of the Regulatory Boards. The Search Committee will consist of seven members, to be nominated by the central government. The members will include: (i) the Chairperson (Cabinet Secretary), (ii) four experts possessing experience in the fields of allied and healthcare education, and public health, (iii) one expert from the field of management, law, or economics, and (iv) the Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
 - **Independent Councils:** The Standing Committee recommended constituting eight independent Councils under the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Profession to regulate specific categories of professions. It suggested that the Commission can act as a central coordinating body. It can delegate its functions pertaining to specific categories of professions to independent Councils.
- The eight Councils recommended by the Committee are: (i) Council for Physiotherapy Professionals; (ii) Council for Medical Radiology, Imaging and Therapeutic Technology Professional; (iii) Council for Medical Laboratory Science Professionals; (iv). Council for Ophthalmic Sciences; (v) Council for Occupational Therapy Professionals; (vi) Council for Medical Technologists; (vii) Council for Life, Nutrition and Behavioural Health Science Professionals; and (viii) Council for Health & Information Management, Physician Associate/Assistant, Primary, Community and other Miscellaneous professional.
- **National Examinations:** The Committee noted that the proposed National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Profession will conduct national level examinations for allied and healthcare professionals. There will be a uniform Common Entrance Test for admission to under-graduate courses in all recognised professions under the Bill. The Commission will specify the manner of conducting common counselling for admission in all allied institutions. The Bill proposes a common final year National Exit Test for each profession to obtain the license for practice. Further, it proposes the National Entrance Test to serve as the basis for admission into post-graduate broad specialty courses. It also proposes a National Teachers' Eligibility Test for postgraduates of each profession of allied and healthcare profession who wish to take up teaching as a profession. The Committee also recommended a Minimum Qualifying Test to test the competency of professionals who are already practising.
- **Regulatory Boards:** The Standing Committee recommended setting of certain autonomous boards under the Commission to regulate the ethics of the allied and healthcare professionals. These boards are: (i) the Under-Graduate Allied and Healthcare Profession Board; (ii) the Post-Graduate Allied and Healthcare Profession Board; (iii) Allied and Healthcare Profession Assessment and Rating Board; and (iv) Allied and Healthcare Professionals Ethics and Registration Board.

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