

**File No. 38-01/2020-DD-III**  
**Government of India**  
**Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment**  
**Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)**  
Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi.

**Dated: 08<sup>th</sup> May, 2020**

**OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**Subject: Meeting to discuss modalities regarding indication of percentage of disability in disability certificate for Persons with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) held on 20.02.2020**

The undersigned is directed to enclose herewith a copy of the minutes of the above stated meeting held under the Chairmanship of Secretary, DEPwD on 20.02.2020 for information and necessary action.

Encl: As above



**(K.V.S. Rao)**

**Director**

**Tel: 24369054**

**To:**

1. Dr. B.D. Athani, Principal Consultant, DGHS, New Delhi
2. Dr. B. Srinivas, ADG (ME), DGHS, New Delhi
3. Dr. Sheffali Gulati, Chief Child Neurology Division, AIIMS, New Delhi
4. Dr. Smita Deshpande, Professor, Dr. RML Hospital, New Delhi

**Copy to:**

1. PPS to Secretary, DEPwD
2. PPS to JS(PS)
3. PS to JS(TR)

**Minutes of the Meeting to discuss modalities regarding indication of percentage disability in disability certificate for Persons with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) held on 20.02.2020 at 3.30 PM in Conference Room, D/o Empowerment of PwDs**

A meeting was held on 20.02.2020 at 3.30 PM in the conference room, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Antyodaya Bhawan, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Secretary, DEPwD to discuss certain issues concerning assessment of specific learning disability. The following attended the meeting:

- i. Ms. Shakuntala D Gamlin, Secretary, DEPwD – in chair
- ii. Dr. Prabodh Seth, Joint Secretary, DEPwD
- iii. Ms. Tarika Roy, Joint Secretary, DEPwD
- iv. Shri K.V.S. Rao, Director, DEPwD
- v. Shri D. K. Panda, Under Secretary, DEPwD
- vi. Shri Shantanu Virendra, Sr. Consultant, DEPwD
- vii. Dr. B.D. Athani, Principal Consultant, DGHS, New Delhi
- viii. Dr. B. Srinivas, ADG (ME), DGHS, New Delhi
- ix. Dr. Sheffali Gulati, Chief Child Neurology Division, AIIMS, New Delhi
- x. Dr. Smita Deshpande, Professor, Dr. RML Hospital, New Delhi
- xi. Dr. Pragati Goyal, Clinical Psychologist, Dr. RML Hospital, New Delhi
- xii. Dr. Vandana Shriharsh, Clinical Psychologist, Dr. RML Hospital, ND

2. While welcoming the participants, Secretary, DEPwD Stated that the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act recognizes five broad categories of disabilities - i. Physical Disability, ii. Intellectual Disability, iii. Mental Illness, iv. Disability caused due to chronic neurological conditions & blood disorder and v. Multiple Disabilities. Specific Learning Disability is included as a specified disability under the broad category of Intellectual Disability. The Department has notified the guidelines for assessment of various specified disabilities including SLD. The objective of convening this meeting was to understand the efficacy of the NIMHANS battery in assessing the SLD.

3. Dr. Smita Deshpande of RML Hospital submitted that NIMHANS Battery for assessment of SLD is useful for assessment in the age group of 8-12 years. Since it is curriculum based, results are often subjective. She stated that there is a need to look for other tools for assessment and Dyslexia Assessment for Languages of India (DALI) could be one of the options, which is undergoing further developments. However, DALI in its present form is limited to assessment of dyslexia only and not other learning disabilities such as dysgraphia, dyscalculia etc. She also requested that psychiatrists should also be considered as medical authorities for certification of SLD.

4. Dr. Sheffali Gulati of AIIMS stated that the assessment guidelines were finalized after extensive consultation in the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and subsequently at the level of DGHS. Initially it was proposed to have four tools namely DALI, GLAD, Curriculum based and NIMHANS battery for assessment of SLD. However, during discussions at DGHS, it was decided to have only one assessment tool to ensure uniformity and accordingly, NIMHANS battery was included in the Notification as it served the largest age group amongst the existing tools. She also stated that it was decided during the meeting that anyone found to be positive on NIMHANS Battery test might be considered as a Person with Benchmark Disability i.e. having disability of more than 40%. However, the same appeared to have been missed inadvertently in the Notification dated 04.01.2018.

5. Dr. B.D. Athani desired to know from the two clinical psychologists namely Dr. Pragati and Dr. Vandana about the correct age for assessment of learning disability and the most appropriate assessment tool. The clinical psychologists contended that learning disabilities can only be assessed after formal education of at least 2 years and as such any assessment test for learning disability cannot be carried out below the age of 6 years. As of now, there is no tool which quantifies the disability in percentage terms in an

objective manner. However, DALI is being developed in that direction but yet to be formally tested and verified.

6. Finally, Dr. B.D. Athani suggested that NIMHANS battery is suitable in the present context as other tools are still under various stages of development.

7. After detailed deliberations, the following decisions were taken:-

i) The Department may consider developing a universal applicability in the existing Guidelines by clarifying that:

a. any person having tested positive on NIMHANS Battery shall be considered as a person with benchmark disability i.e. disability of more than 40%.

b. medical authorities for certification of SLD shall also include psychiatrists in addition to pediatrician or pediatric neurologists.

ii) Dr. RML Hospital, Delhi may consider submitting a proposal for developing a standardized tool for assessment and certification of SLD which can be supported under the R & D scheme of this Department.

The meeting ended with thanks to the Chair.

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