Care Protocol for Babies in India

Why in news?

A British nurse was sentenced to life in prison after being found guilty in the worst child serial killer case in the history of the U.K.

What are patient safety provisions in India?

- **National Patient safety Implementation Framework -** It was launched for the period 2018-25 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Patient safety -** It is the fundamental element of *public healthcare*, defined as the freedom for a patient from unnecessary harm.
- **Hippocratic Oath -** It is an oath of ethics historically taken by physician which is one of the most widely known of Greek medical texts.
- **Consumer Protection Act,1986 -** It deals with medical negligence and deficiency of services
- **Clinical Establishment Act, 2010 -** It sets out the legal rights of the patients.
- **Institutional Mechanism -** To see the patients' rights in terms of medication and devices are protected and that they are not overcharged.
    1. National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority
    2. Drugs Controller General of India

- **Charter of patients' rights -** It is adopted by the *National Human Rights Commission*.
- It act as a guidance document for the Union Government and State Governments to formulate concrete mechanisms for Patients' Rights.
- **Charter of Patients' Rights and Responsibilities -** It is approved by *National Council for Clinical Establishments*.
- **Responsibilities of Patients' -**
    1. Provide all health related information.
    2. Cooperate with Doctors during examination and treatment.
    3. Pay hospitals agreed fees on time.
    4. Respect dignity of doctors and other hospital staff.
    5. Never resort to violence

Patients' Rights in India

• Right to Information
• Right to record and reports
• Right to emergency medical care
• Right to informed consent
• Right to confidentiality, privacy and dignity
• Right to second opinion
• Right to transparency in rates.
• Right to non-discrimination
• Right to safety and quality care according to standards
• Right to patient education
• Right to be heard and seek redressal
• Right to protection of participants involved in clinical trials
• Right to choose source for obtaining medicines and tests

How is neonatal safety maintained?

- **Rules -** There are no exclusive rules for neonatal care and safety, or protection against external harm in Indian hospitals.
- However, there are provisions and checks against issues like inadvertent mix-up of babies at birth and abduction.

Neonates refers to the period from birth to 28 days of baby's life. Neonatal safety refers to the precautions that parents and caregivers should take to protect new born babies from harm.

- **Training -** The healthcare staff is also trained to counsel parents and provide emotional support, contributing to the safety and development of neonates.
- **Adequate manpower -** Trained healthcare is fostered by adequate staffing which can closely monitor each baby's condition and respond swiftly to any concerns.
- **Equipment -** Neonates are typically kept in controlled environments to avoid exposure to external infections and temperature fluctuations.

Status of neonates
• **Global -** The global number of neonatal deaths declined from 5 million in 1990 to 2.4 million in 2019. • **India -** The current Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) for India in 2023 is 26.6 deaths per 1,000 live births.

What lies ahead?

- Regular training and continuing medical education for healthcare staff are essential to maintain high-quality neonatal care and uphold safety standards.
- The global organisation has also advised families that prompt medical care should be sought in case of danger signs.
- These include feeding problems, reduced activity, difficult breathing, fever, fits or convulsions, jaundice in the first 24 hours after birth.
- Families are also required to register the birth and bring the baby for timely vaccination, according to national schedules.

References

1. The Hindu- What is the care protocol babies in India
2. NHRC- Charter of Patients' rights

