



A Review of Healthcare Services for Truck Drivers in Transport Areas, Delhi NCT

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ABSTRACT

The health of truck drivers is contingent upon their ability to access healthcare services of exceptional quality. The health and well-being of truck drivers are contingent upon receiving appropriate healthcare, as it enables them to perform their duties effectively while safeguarding their overall health. A comprehensive literature analysis was undertaken to identify pertinent research on healthcare services for truck drivers in Delhi National Capital Territory (NCT). The provision of healthcare services in transportation areas for truck drivers provides a multitude of benefits. The presence of high-quality healthcare services in Transport Nagar has a beneficial effect on the health and well-being of truck drivers. It is imperative to provide truck drivers with comprehensive knowledge regarding the importance of healthcare and to actively promote their engagement in seeking appropriate medical care for any health concerns they may have.

Key Words: Truck Driver, Healthcare, Delhi NCT, Transport area

INTRODUCTION:

The health and well-being of truck drivers are undeniably intertwined with the accessibility and provision of high-quality healthcare services. As individuals who spend a significant amount of time on the road, truck drivers face unique health challenges that necessitate adequate healthcare support (Johnson et al., 2020). The demanding nature of their profession, characterised by long hours of sedentary work, irregular sleep patterns, and limited access to nutritious food options, contributes to a higher risk of chronic health conditions (Lalla-Edward ST et al., 2018). Consequently, the availability of quality healthcare services plays a crucial role in promoting the overall health and well-being of truck drivers, ensuring their ability to perform their job effectively while safeguarding their long-term health outcomes.

According to a study conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA, 2023), access to healthcare for essential workers has a significant impact on road safety. This, in turn, reduces the risk of accidents caused by health-related issues while operating vehicles, thereby improving road safety. Moreover, the economic productivity of a nation is closely linked to the health of its workforce. According to recent studies, individuals who spend a significant amount of time on the road often face challenges in accessing adequate medical assistance, thereby increasing their vulnerability to various health issues (Benstowe S., 2008). This lack of access to medical help can have detrimental consequences, as it can exacerbate the severity of injuries sustained during accidents or adverse weather driving conditions (Apostolopoulos Y et al., 2013).

The primary objective of this review article is to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the existing healthcare services provided to truck drivers in the transport areas of Delhi NCT. By critically examining the current state of affairs, this study endeavours to shed light on the challenges faced by truck drivers in

accessing adequate healthcare facilities while also identifying potential opportunities for enhancing the provision of healthcare services in this specific context. Through a meticulous examination of the available literature and empirical evidence, this research aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on healthcare services for truck drivers, thereby facilitating the formulation of evidence-based strategies for improvement.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

A comprehensive literature review was undertaken with the objective of identifying pertinent studies pertaining to healthcare services specifically tailored for truck drivers within the geographical confines of the Delhi National Capital Territory (NCT). The investigation was carried out by utilising the databases PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar. The present study employed a comprehensive search strategy incorporating the utilisation of specific search terms, namely "truck drivers," "healthcare services," and "Delhi NCT." Additionally, a reconnaissance visit was undertaken to various health facilities in order to ascertain the range of healthcare services accessible to truck drivers. The review was conducted during the months of February 2023 and March 2023.

STUDY AREA:

According to the Government of Delhi, Transport Department (2022), in the National Capital Territory of Delhi, there are two prominent transport hubs, namely Sanjay Gandhi Transport Nagar (SGTN) and Punjabi Bagh Transport Nagar (PBTN). The SGTN facility is recognised as the second largest truck terminal in Asia, boasting an impressive operational capacity of over 2000 trucks per day. The establishment is situated on the Outer Ring Road in the western region of Delhi. Punjabi Bagh Transport Nagar serves as a prominent transportation hub for the North Western region of India, boasting a substantial capacity to efficiently accommodate more than 1000 trucks on a daily basis. The establishment is situated along National Highway 1 in the north-west region of Delhi. Both terminals offer a comprehensive array of services to truck operators and drivers, encompassing parking facilities, repair and maintenance services, as well as fueling stations. The SGTN serves as a significant transportation hub for the movement of goods and commodities between Delhi and various regions within India. (Map Source: www.mapsofindia.org)

HEALTHCARE SERVICES AVAILABILITY IN TRANSPORT AREAS OF DELHI NCT

One of the primary impediments to truck drivers' ability to access high-quality healthcare services pertains to their constant travel from one transportation route to another. The individuals express a desire to remain in close proximity to their vehicle, citing concerns regarding the safety of their truck as well as the unpredictability of their loading schedule. In light of temporal constraints, individuals often find themselves unable to venture into towns and cities to undergo routine health examinations. The optimal approach for addressing health concerns within a constrained timeframe and maintaining the well-being of individuals in the transport sector is through the utilisation of health facilities.

In this review study, we have undertaken a comprehensive examination of the primary healthcare services provided in a healthcare setting. Our analysis has focused on the fundamental aspects of these services, including general health check-ups, blood pressure assessments, diabetes screenings, and the provision of necessary medications to camp participants. Specialty health care services include physiotherapy, eye care, ENT care, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, diabetes, hypertension, and other cardiovascular diseases. The transport Nagar areas of Delhi NCT offer a range of facilities, including the following:

1. Government dispensaries and clinics

In the context of public healthcare provision, the state government has undertaken a proactive approach by implementing primary healthcare services in proximity to transport hubs through the establishment of Mohalla clinics. There are two Mohalla clinics located in the vicinity of the transportation hubs. The Mohalla clinics provide primary healthcare services and have also established a referral network with primary health care centres to facilitate the provision of sub-specialty health care services. The aforementioned facility is utilised by a significant proportion of the local populace residing in close proximity to the mentioned facilities. The utilisation of these services by truck drivers is observed to be low, primarily attributed to a dearth of time and awareness among this population.

2. Non-Government Organizations/ Corporate Foundations run Clinics

It has been noted that there are currently six clinics being operated within transportation areas by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and corporate foundations. These organisations offer the following healthcare services: Some entities offer a single healthcare service, while others provide multiple healthcare services.

S. No.	Types of services offered	Numbers of NGO/ Chairity Hospitals
1.	General healthcare & free medicine	2
2.	Eye healthcare	3
3.	Physiotherapy Healthcare	1
4.	HIV / AIDS	2
5.	Tuberculosis treatment services	2
6.	ENT Care	1
7.	Management of Cardiovascular disease (CVD) (Hypertension, Diabetes, Cholesterols)	2

Primary healthcare and specialty care services to truck drivers at no cost or at a very reasonable and affordable price. The strategic location of the healthcare facility near transportation hubs enhances accessibility to healthcare services for truck drivers. A significant proportion of truck drivers get access to primary health care services through these clinics.

3. Mobile Health Clinics

During the study period, there are two mobile vans operated by corporate foundations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with the purpose of providing healthcare services to truck drivers at their workplaces and rest areas. The objective of these vans is to deliver primary healthcare services of exceptional quality to truck drivers. One van offers eye and ENT healthcare services, while the other provides general healthcare services to truck drivers and the allied trucking community at their workplace. These services are delivered through the organisation of health, eye, and ENT check-up camps.

4. Outreach Health Check-Up Camps

The provision of primary health care services for truck drivers and transport-allied communities in the transport areas is a collaborative effort undertaken by various organisations, including truck drivers' associations, drivers' welfare associations, and traders' welfare organisations. These entities diligently organise and administer periodic health care services to cater to the specific needs of this population. The present study entails an observation of the annual organisation of 12–14 community health check-up camps for truck drivers and the associated community within transport areas. According to the survey conducted, a comprehensive analysis reveals that a total of 14 healthcare camps were successfully orchestrated within transport areas throughout the duration of the year 2022. These healthcare camps were specifically designed to cater to the needs of truck drivers, a population that is often overlooked in terms of accessible healthcare services. The aforementioned camps proved to be highly advantageous, as they provided essential medical assistance to a noteworthy count of 2,948 truck drivers.

5. Private hospitals and clinics

Private clinics play a significant role in providing primary healthcare services, encompassing the administration of medication, which is facilitated through paid services. According to the findings of the study, it has been determined that there exists a limited number of private small clinics, specifically two, that offer primary health care services.

In addition, it is crucial to emphasise the diverse initiatives that have been implemented to improve the accessibility of healthcare services for truck drivers in the SGTN and PBTN regions. The All-India Transporters Welfare Association (AITWA) and the National Health Authority (NHA) are collaborating to enhance healthcare services for truck drivers by implementing the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) scheme. The primary objective of this collaborative initiative is to effectively meet the healthcare requirements of truck drivers, thereby promoting their overall welfare and facilitating their access to high-quality medical services. Under the provisions of this programme, truck drivers and their families are afforded the opportunity to access healthcare services either free of charge or at a discounted rate. These services are provided by hospitals that are either operated by the government or privately owned. These hospitals have been enlisted and approved under the scheme.

ADVANTAGES OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES IN TRANSPORT AREAS

The provision of health care services within the transportation sector, specifically targeting truck drivers, yields numerous advantages. The present study encompasses the following:

- Improved health and well-being of truck drivers. Truck drivers are a high-risk population for a number of health problems due to their sedentary lifestyle, poor diet, and stress levels. Access to quality health care services can help truck drivers prevent and manage chronic diseases, treat injuries and illnesses promptly and effectively, and get the support they need to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

- Reduced absenteeism and turnover. Truck drivers who are healthy and well-cared for are less likely to miss work due to illness or injury, and they are more likely to stay in their jobs. This can lead to significant cost savings for trucking companies and improved efficiency for the transportation industry as a whole.
 - Increased productivity. Healthy and well-rested truck drivers are more productive than their unhealthy and fatigued counterparts. This is because they are able to focus better, make better decisions, and react more quickly. This can lead to improved safety and efficiency on the roads.
 - Reduced risk of accidents. Truck drivers who are healthy and well cared for are less likely to be involved in accidents. This is because they are less likely to be impaired by fatigue, illness, or medication side effects.
 - Improved public health. Truck drivers travel extensively, so their health has a direct impact on the health of the communities they visit. By providing truck drivers with access to quality health care services, we can help reduce the spread of infectious diseases and improve the overall health of the population.
 - Employers of truck drivers can also benefit from providing their employees with access to quality healthcare services. Healthy employees are more productive and less likely to miss work due to illness or injury. This can lead to lower costs for employers and a more efficient workforce.
- Overall, quality healthcare services are essential for the good health of truck drivers and for the benefit of the trucking industry as a whole.

CONCLUSION

Truck drivers face an elevated susceptibility to many health issues as a result of their predominantly inactive way of life, inadequate dietary habits, and heightened levels of stress. Individuals in this occupation frequently have extended work hours and unpredictable schedules, hence encountering challenges in accessing healthcare services inside conventional business hours. The provision of healthcare services in the transportation areas of Delhi NCT is primarily facilitated through various channels, including Mohalla Clinic, clinics and mobile vans operated by NGOs and corporate foundations, community health check-up camps and private clinics. It contributes to the enhancement of the overall well-being and quality of life of truck drivers. This also addresses the barriers to accessing healthcare services, such as limited availability of time, financial constraints, and apprehension towards seeking healthcare services from unlicensed or traditional practitioners. It is imperative to provide truck drivers with comprehensive education and awareness regarding the importance of healthcare and to actively promote their engagement in seeking appropriate medical treatment for any health concerns they may encounter.

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