

Omicron patients in Delhi to be isolated, treated at Lok Nayak hospital

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The Delhi Health Department has designated Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan Hospital as the dedicated facility to treat patients testing positive for the new COVID-19 variant Omicron.

The hospital has been asked to earmark wards for isolating and treating such patients.

The department also said that no patient with the new variant will be denied admission to hospitals on any ground.

The Union Health Ministry had Sunday issued new guidelines for international travellers for reporting of Omicron, which has been classified as 'variant of concern' by the World Health Organization (WHO).

According to the guidelines, a separate isolation unit has to be set up for the patients indicating the presence of Omicron.

"Accordingly, Lok Nayak Hospital is hereby designated as the dedicated hospital which will treat the patients detected with the new variant of SARS-CoV-2. Lok Nayak Hospital will designate one or more separate wards (as per need) for isolating and treating such patients," the order read.

Omicron is the fifth WHO-designated variant of concern first identified in South Africa. The other four are Alpha, Beta, Gamma, and Delta.

The WHO has said it is "not yet clear" if the newly-detected variant is more transmissible or causes more severe disease, but authorities across states in India ramped up efforts to deal with the evolving situation.

Earlier in the day, authorities in the national capital ordered RT-PCR testing for all people arriving from 'high-risk' countries, genome sequencing of the positive cases and mandatory isolation.

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