

Innovative schemes to rehabilitate disabled: Minister

December 07, 2016 08:43 pm | Updated 08:43 pm IST - Thiruvananthapuram:

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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The government intends to ensure the welfare and proper rehabilitation of the disabled through innovative programmes under the State Initiative on Disabilities (SID), Health Minister K.K. Shylaja has said.

The programmes will be implemented jointly by the departments of Health, Social Justice, Local Self-Government and Education.

The government intends to adopt a lifecycle approach when it comes to tackling disabilities, by creating awareness on prevention of disabilities, early screening and identification, early intervention, vocational training and rehabilitation, she said.

Steps have been taken to draw up a uniform design for the District Early Intervention Centres in districts. These centres will be made the hubs for disability management in every district by providing facilities for ante-natal screening for disabilities, special education, physiotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, sensory integration therapy, virtual rehabilitation therapy and play therapy for the disabled children and counselling, training and guidance sessions for parents, Ms. Shylaja said in a statement.

She said that the government also intended to implement a special anganwadi scheme across the State so that children with developmental delays can be identified and given proper training, and therapy at a very

young age. All parents of children with disabilities and anganwadi workers will be given training in identifying and training children.

Efforts are also on to strengthen the BUDS schools under local bodies to help children with intellectual disabilities.

The BUDS school at Periya in Kasaragod district has already been transformed as a model child rehabilitation centre and other BUDS schools will be transformed on the same lines. The local bodies should identify the space while the SID team will provide the necessary technical assistance, the Minister said.

The BUDS rehabilitation centres for older children with intellectual disabilities will be augmented with more vocational rehabilitation programmes.

The government will also open help desks in these disability management centres in all districts so that comprehensive information on welfare schemes for the disabled children are given to parents, Ms. Shylaja added.