

## ANTENATAL CLINIC INTEGRATED WITH YOGA AND NATUROPATHY: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH FROM TAMIL NADU



### Problem Statement

The Indian Systems of Medicine and the modern system of medicine play a complementary role. With Siddha being popular in Tamil Nadu, the government of Tamil Nadu has made efforts to provide one AYUSH practitioner in every primary health centre in a phased manner. These centres are co-located with additional PHCs in order to provide adjunct or better alternative to allopathic medical treatment to the public at large for people to exercise their choice in accessing the health service.

### Program Description

In addition to the District Hospitals, a Siddha wing was operationalized in all block PHCs. There were 479 such units prior to NRHM. Under NRHM, 475 additional centers started to provide AYUSH service - 300 Siddha, including 175 collectively for Ayurveda, Unani, Homoeopathy, Yoga and Naturopathy. 33 Yoga units were established in PHCs in 2010.

The antenatal clinic is once a week in the PHC. Integrated approach for normal delivery without episiotomy from early stage of antenatal period is encouraged. Nearly 50-80 mothers-to-be attend the clinic for medical examination and investigation by the allopathic doctors. While they wait for the examination or for the test results, groups of expectant mothers are sent to the Yoga and Naturopathy physician. He / she categorize the antenatal Cases by trimester and provide appropriate treatment. During antenatal visit to PHC, a Naturopathic Doctor (ND) works with the expecting mother, providing counseling and educating her on lifestyle changes. This process begins with prenatal care, continuing through birth and after the delivery.

Siddha doctors also provide drugs that are required during pregnancy. Apart from this, the yoga physician teaches exercises during the antenatal and postnatal period, whenever mothers attend post natal check-up and during infant immunization.

The women learn exercises under direct supervision and continue to practice them at home. Postural, breathing and pelvic floor exercises along with back and spinal twist exercises are taught.

#### **Program Impact**

Kulumani, an upgraded PHC with 30 beds, in Tiruchirapalli District is one of the 33 yoga centers. It started providing yoga and naturopathy services in March 2010.