

INTEGRATION OF PALLIATIVE CARE IN HEALTH SERVICES, MAHARASHTRA (Public – Private Partnership Initiative with Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai)

Problem Statement

Palliative care is aimed at improving the quality of life through relief of physical, psycho – social and spiritual suffering. Palliative care is required in terminal period of cancer, neurological and cardio – respiratory diseases. It is estimated that more than one million people in India suffer from moderate to severe pain every year due to advanced cancer, HIV and AIDS, and a variety of other progressive, incurable or otherwise life – limiting health conditions. Morphine, the key medication for treating moderate to severe pain is inexpensive, highly effective and generally easy to administer. Yet only a small fraction of patients have access to adequate palliative health services.

Keeping this in view, the National Rural Health Mission, Maharashtra, initiated a public private model in partnership with the Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai to integrate palliative care in health services.

Program Description

This initiative aimed at integrating palliative care into health care services. The objectives included

- Capacity building of health care professionals in palliative care: health care professionals included physicians, nurses, medical and social workers at the block and the primary health care level, to enable them to identify patients requiring palliative care and enabling them to deliver appropriate and holistic care.
- Training the outreach health workers: including ASHAs, ANMs among others in basic palliative care principles and practices to identify patients in the community requiring palliative care and

to deliver basic care to them at home or in the community.

- Ensure the availability of morphine and other opioids at the block level.
- Ensure access of children with life limiting conditions to appropriate paediatric palliative care facilities.

Currently this project is being implemented in two blocks, i.e. Jawhar block of Thane district and Igatpur block of Nashik district through SDH/ Rural Hospital & Primary Health Centers. The beneficiaries include patients with

- Cancer
- Chronic infection such as hiv, complicated tb and leprosy.
- Chronic cardiac conditions such as ischaemic cardiac failure, cardio – myopathies, ccf with multiple exacerbations and congenital heart diseases
- Chronic renal failure,
- Neurological conditions such as stroke, multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's diseases, chronic progressive neurological conditions,
- Chronic liver diseases such as liver failure, alcoholic liver disease and chronic hepatitis.
- Rheumatologic conditions such as SLE, Rheumatoid arthritis among others.

Program Impact

The trainings have been conducted in Palliative care by Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai. The following were the progress of training:

Trained Human Resources	2011 - 12	2012 - 13	Total
Medical Officers	8	27	45
Medical Social Workers	1	1	2
Nurses/ ANMs	45	38	83
ASHAs	239	188	427
	303	254	557

Scalability

This initiative carried out under the PPP model has been successfully implemented in Maharashtra, in a neglected yet pertinent

area of patient well-being. Such initiatives can be scaled to other states, keeping the local needs in conditions in perspective.