



Jan to Mar 2023

ASPIRE QUARTERLY REPORT

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Project Overview



India is a major contributor to the global burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). This constitutes a major public health challenge, impacting both social and economic development. The percentage of deaths caused by non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in India has increased from 37.9% in 1990 to 61.8% in 2016, according to ICMR "India: Health of the Nation's States" report-2017. In Telangana, the proportion of total disease burden from NCDs was recorded at 59.2%¹ To address this, the People-to-People Health Foundation (PPHF) proposes to strengthen the NCD service delivery at the primary health level. PPHF is working on an integrated approach for prevention, early detection, and capacity building for tackling NCDs. PPHF, with the support of the Telangana state government, National Health Mission (NHM), and Sanofi India, came together to work towards strengthening healthcare services like prevention, health promotion, early detection, and management of NCDs and their risk factors, particularly at the urban primary healthcare level to reduce morbidity and mortality due to NCDs.

At the start of year 3, the state government was intimated of the future proceedings. In February 2023 two community mobilizers were appointed and oriented at two UPHCs namely Kukatpally and Moosapet with govt permission. In year 3, work is in progress toward establishing and sustaining a total of four patient support groups (PSGs) for diagnosed diabetes and hypertension patients along with continuing community mobilization activities.

¹ Indian Council of Medical Research, Public Health Foundation of India, and Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. India: Health of the Nation's States - The India State-level Disease Burden Initiative. New Delhi, India: ICMR, PHFI, and IHME; 2017.

Target beneficiaries

- All adults aged 30 years and above.
- Health care workers in urban health care centers.

Objectives

- Build the capacity of the UPHC health teams to deliver essential NCD services.
- Enable increased public awareness of NCDs through health education and promotion related to critical health issues in the community.
- Strengthen the implementation of NCD population-based screening (PBS) guidelines at the UPHCs.
- Establish linkages between Aarogyasri Insurance schemes for improving treatment adherence.

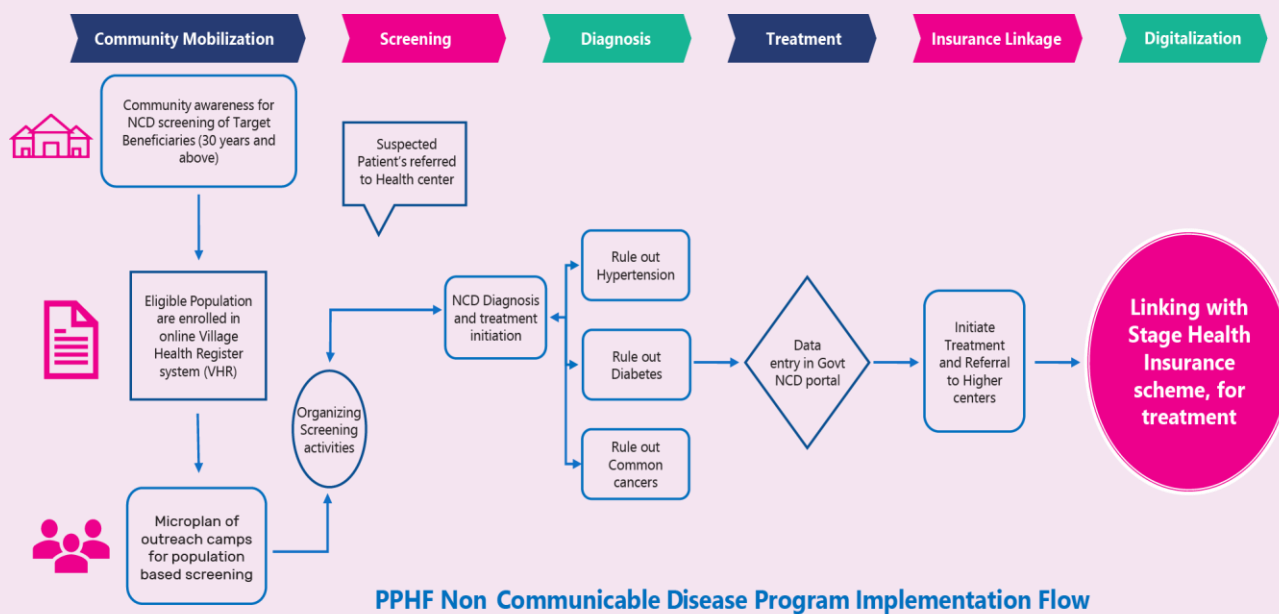


Figure 1: Program intervention plan at the intervention site

Key highlights

- A total 2058 of people enrolled in the Village health registry in the first quarter (February 1st, 2023 to March 31st, 2023).
- Two enrolment meetings to establish two patient support groups were held at UPHC Kukatpally & Moosapet on 17th and 25th March 2023.
- Total 1016 people screened for NCDs (February 1st, 2023 to March 31st, 2023)

Population Screened in the first quarter of 2023

NCD	Number of people screened	Number of people suspected and referred to PHC	Number of people diagnosed and under treatment in govt. facility
Diabetes	1016	413	78
Hypertension	1016	443	71
Breast cancer	74	0	0
Cervical cancer	12	0	0
Oral cancer	1016	1	1

(Source: State NCD portal from February 1st, 2023 till March 31st, 2023)

Major Activities

Screening Activity

Village Health Registration (VHR)

Need: The purpose of a Village Health Register is to make a permanent patient database of all residents who are residing in the catchment area and establish a linkage between insurance (Arogyasree) and individuals for improving treatment adherence. Project ASPIRE aims to strengthen this provision.

Specific activity: Digitizing patient records through house-to-house surveys.

Process followed: At each intervention site, the community mobilizer/volunteer surveyed house-to-house visits and recorded household information in the first half of the day. This activity included recording Aadhar details and the contact information of the members who are above 30 years. The mobilizer also engaged in a positive dialogue to encourage the target beneficiaries to visit the UPHC and get screened for NCDs under population-based screening. Post lunch, the volunteer entered this information in the database supported by the NCD state portal. This stored data in the database ensured that community members migrating to another place in Telangana while undergoing treatment at the previous facility could still visit the nearest PHC by providing their Aadhar details or contact details to pull out the relevant health information and continue their treatment. This process also minimizes duplication at the population level.

Outcome: A total of 2058 individuals have been enrolled in VHR till the end of the first quarter of 2023 at the two UPHCs.

Call to action drive for NCD screening

Need: NCDs are of long duration and generally slow progression, causing complications that gradually lead to death. So, they are referred to as silent killers. To reduce the mortality of NCDs, the government has initiated Population Based Screening (PBS) for early detection and treatment of the five targeted NCDs.

Process followed: The community mobilizers through house-to-house visits, mobilized the beneficiaries for screening and follow-up to ensure that they are seeking appropriate treatment.

Specific Activity: The PPHF Community mobilizer in each facility supports the staff in educating, mobilizing, and streamlining the screening activities and providing support in digital entries of the NCD data in the State NCD digital application.

Outcome: A total of 1016 individuals aged 30 and above were screened at the two UPHCs. Indicator-wise details of NPCDCS-related activities are tabulated below. Data from February 1st, 2023 to March 31st, 2023, was collected from Telangana State NCD Portal.

NCD	Number of people screened	Number of people suspected and referred to PHC	Number of people diagnosed and under treatment in govt. facility
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(Source: State NCD portal from February 1st, 2023, to March 31st 2023)

Community Awareness: Health Days Celebration

Need: Health days aim to promote awareness of specific themes and issues and diseases. The theme for the year World Cancer Day 2023 is “Close the care gap” which is about understanding the inequities in cancer care and taking action to make the necessary progress to address them.

Process followed: A Day before the awareness session, community volunteers informed the community residents about the purpose and venue of these awareness sessions.

Specific activity: As a part of project ASPIRE, PPHF Telangana team in partnership with Sanofi conducted awareness sessions at Shiva Sena Ground and PR Nagar Basti Dawakhana between the 3rd to 5th February 2023. Dr. Vijaya from Magna Carta Foundation and Dr. Vishali from PPHF Telangana team explained to the attendees the purpose of the awareness session and the importance of the World Cancer Day celebration. The participants were made aware of the importance of early screening for Cancer by Medical Officers. Dr. Vishali (BDS, MPH) delivered an awareness talk on the signs, symptoms, and risk factors of developing Oral Cancer and the importance of regular screening. The attendees were encouraged to get screened for NCDs and Cancer at their nearest health facility.

Outcome: A total of 62 people attended and received knowledge about common cancer symptoms.



Establishment of Patient Support Groups at two UPHCs.

Need: To improve the health outcomes of diabetes and hypertension among patients, Patient Support Groups (PSGs) can be an effective way. It helps individuals to manage their health and well-being, reduce stress, and feel more connected to others who are going through similar experiences.² In year 3, establishing and sustaining four patient support groups (PSGs) for diabetes and is proposed.

Specific Activity: Enrolment meetings were held at UPHC Kukatpally and Moosapet on 17th and 25th March 2023 respectively for two patient support groups.

Process followed: After conceptualization, the plan was discussed with the district officials, state officials, and UPHC Medical Officers to incorporate their suggestions. A line list of 40 patients with

² RE Sanya. Effectiveness of self-financing patient-led support groups in the management of hypertension and diabetes in low- and middle-income countries: Systematic review. [Internet]. Faculty of History. 2022 [cited 2023 Mar 8]

Diabetes and/or Hypertension at each UPHC was made by the community mobilizers under the supervision of Medical Officers. On the day of the meeting, after the roll call, a talk on the introduction, purpose, and importance of the Patient Support Group was delivered by Dr. Vishali (PPHF Telangana team). A brief talk on the importance of lifestyle modification was delivered by the Medical Officers. Baseline data of the attendees were recorded. Community mobilizers were directed to gather baseline parameters e.g., patient profile, health parameters, blood sugar, and blood pressure, etc. The patient diary will be provided and maintained by community mobilizers for each patient and will gradually be handed over to the PSG members.

Outcome: Out of the line list, a total of 23 patients at Kukatpally and 32 at Moosapet UPHCs came for the scheduled meeting. The absentees are being followed up by the community mobilizers and the field team is working toward achieving the target enrollment of 40 patients at both UPHCs.



Learnings and Challenges

Recruitment of patients for the patient support groups.

- Some individuals were skeptical of being a part of such a group, continuous motivation, and awareness delivery through regular follow-up with the help of field staff is the key to overcoming such skepticism and reluctance.
- The patients were counselled about the PSGs and their benefits. The UPHC staff has also been very helpful in motivating these patients.

Arranging meetings for PSGs regularly

Community mobilizers coordinated with the UPHC field staff to make the line list of the DM/HTN patients and mobilize them for meeting agenda setting and meetings via regular follow-up. Despite such efforts, some of the patients from the line list did not turn up on the meeting day. The community mobilizers followed up with these patients and are encouraging them to come for the subsequent meeting.

Making a WhatsApp group for smooth communication and follow up

Since many of the individuals in the target group are elderly, they do not use smartphones which becomes a challenge when making a PSG WhatsApp group. To overcome this, the community mobilizers collected their relatives' contact numbers with their permission. For those not having such an alternative, the community mobilizers are keeping them updated about PSG meetings, activities, and follow-up by regular phone calls.

Logistics challenges in PSG meetings (healthy food options)

In the PSG meeting, we want to demonstrate via actions like arranging healthy food options, coconut water, less oil, and less salty snacks. However, it is not an easy task, and one has to walk a very tight rope to accommodate healthy and affordable food options for the gathering.

Plan for the next quarter (1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023)

- Publishing reports and papers after scientific evaluation of the Community mobiliser model
- Publishing reports and papers after scientific evaluation of bottlenecks in cervical cancer screening to effectively implement the cancer screening drive in the community.
- Develop implementation guidelines to operationalize and scale the government's urban NCD program, adopting evidence-based lessons from ASPIRE Hyderabad.
- Continuum of care approach model in year 3 of the project will focus on strengthening the appropriate and timely referral mechanism for the treatment and management of common NCDs, especially cancer.
- Imparting interventions for lifestyle modification to improve the overall health status of Diabetes & Hypertension patients through monthly Patient Support Group meetings at the two UPHCs.
- Capacity-building (Training-of-Trainers) on guidelines for NCD service delivery in urban areas.

ABOUT PPHF

We are a global health non-profit organization working towards transforming lives for improved health and well-being through locally-driven solutions. We have worked in more than 20 states of India with an aim to build the skills of healthcare providers, strengthen management capacity and help create sustainable systems to improve access to quality health services.

We work closely with communities and key actors on sustainable solutions for public health challenges:

Non-Communicable Diseases

Women, Adolescent and Child health

Nutrition

Infectious diseases

Environmental Health

Emergency Health and Disaster Response

We focus on building public health capacity and community actions for better health outcomes. We work collaboratively with stakeholders, leveraging partnerships and influencing policies and practices. Drawing on our experiences and recognizing the unique needs of each region in India, we work in partnership with key stakeholders to design and deliver targeted responses.

Contributor

People To People Health Foundation

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