

Mobile Health Unit



IMPACT REPORT

Kraft *Heinz*

Rise
AGAINST HUNGER
INDIA

 **SACH**
Society For Action In Community Health

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The health indicators in rural India are far from satisfactory with rising health costs pushing the poor and the marginalised even farther away from effective health care delivery systems. This impact report on Mobile Health Units (MHU) launched in October 2106 by Society of Action in Community Health (SACH) with support from Kraft Heinz in 23 villages of Parkasam and Banka districts of Andhra Pradesh and Bihar underlines this fact.

These MHUs are treating more than 23,000 chronic patients. While these are regular patients, MHUs also reached out to more than 1,00,000 people suffering from seasonal and minor ailments. This is really huge against the backdrop of existing public health care facilities which are ill equipped, overcrowded or don't have enough medicines to address the health problems of this large chunk of people living in these villages. The private hospitals are beyond the meager resources of the people. Left with little choice, a majority of these people were dependent on the unqualified doctors or the quacks who were not only plundering their precious little money, but were also putting them to greater health risks. Besides, very few could afford to go for regular health check-ups.

Several case studies conducted by us have revealed that before the intervention through MHUs, these chronic patients were spending Rs 4,000-6,000 on blood and other tests and the medicines. Now, not only are they getting free treatment at their doorsteps but are also assured of reliable diagnosis from a qualified team comprising a doctor, lab technician and pharmacist. The biggest success of these MHUs lies in the fact that they have provided dignity to the elderly and the women, who felt neglect and suffered in silence for the want of access to quality treatment. These facilities also freed them from the clutches of the local money lenders who were making the most of the helplessness of these people.

We are thankful to Kraft Heinz for supporting this initiative and the Rise Against Hunger for effectively implementing it.

KP Rajendran
Secretary General and CEO
Society for Action in Community Health (SACH)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

That more than 23,000 hold patient cards with majority suffering from multiple chronic diseases are coming for regular treatment reflects the efficacy and the popularity of the MHUs in Prakasam and Banka districts of Andhra Pradesh and Bihar respectively. In more than two years since its inception in October 2016, the initiative has not only left its footprints across the intervention villages, but also reached out to nearby regions whenever required.

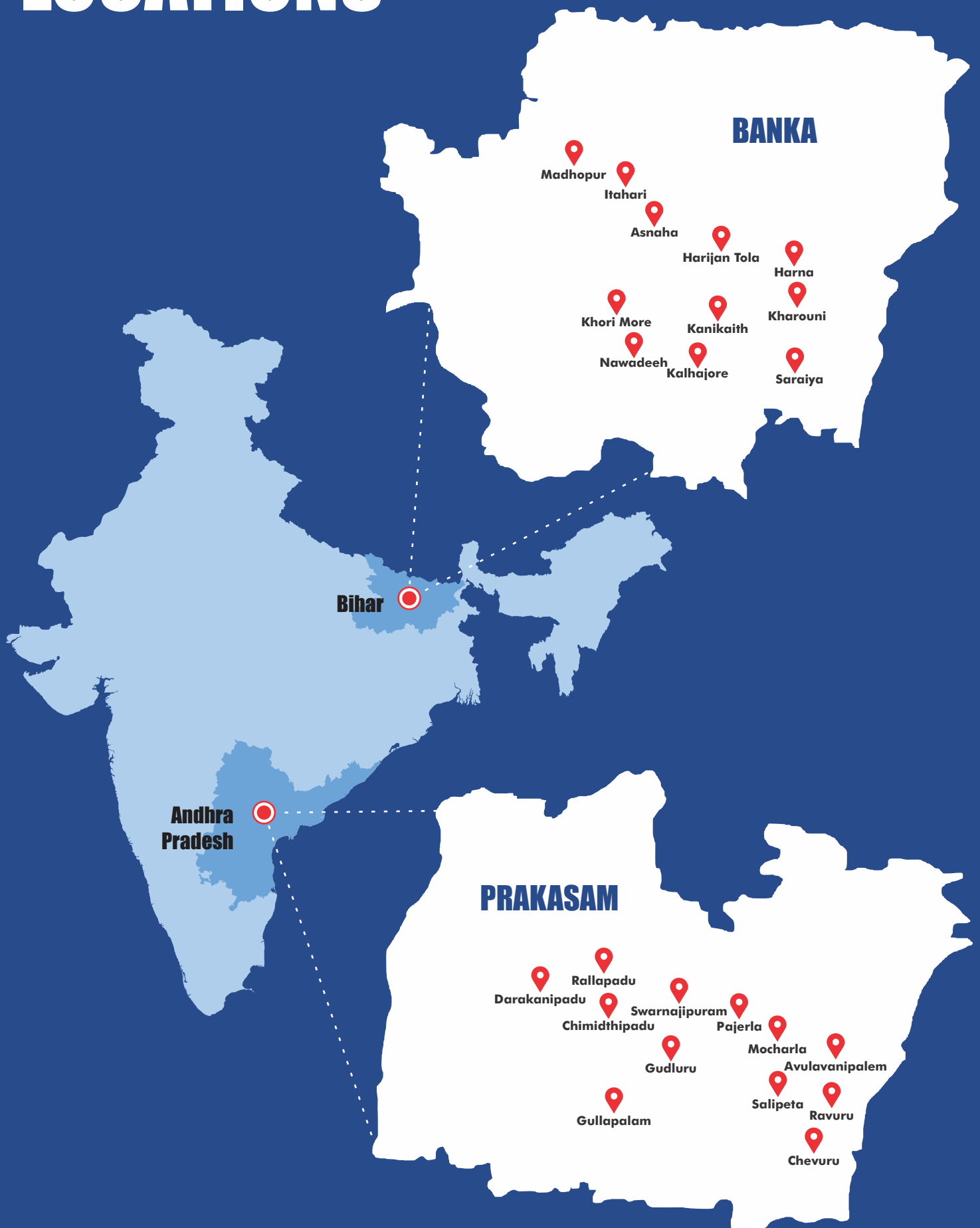
So, deliberating scaling-up strategies is not without reasons given its success and the traction it is getting in the intervention and surrounding regions. This involves expanding its areas of operation, besides giving more space to awareness. This report covers many aspects- efficacy of MHUs, socio-economic challenges faced by the beneficiaries before the treatment and how their lives have been transformed after intervention. The major impact of MHUs has been on the lives of those suffering from chronic diseases such as diabetes, lower respiratory tract infection (LRTI), hyper tension and gastritis, besides the common ailments.

In the last two years the MHUs have been able to not only treat the patients efficiently but also generated awareness as to how to manage the diseases such as diabetes and hypertension which are so rampant in Prakasam and Banka villages respectively. Information on which the report is based was derived primarily from the data collected by the MHU personnel during October 2016-March 2018. The report has been compiled after monitoring of the outreach of MHUs, number and frequency of patients, major diseases, progress, success and challenges faced. It also delved into a variety of health delivery systems, both public and private which are either expensive or ineffective to a large extent due to lack of sufficient diagnostics facilities, unavailability of expensive drugs and the locations which are far from these villages.

The MHUs not only reached their door steps but also provided free medicines. As suggested by several reports on farm distress in the country, a large chunk of population in the villages is in a debt trap because of rising health costs which the rural masses are not able to meet. While conducting the case studies, many beneficiaries admitted that MHUs have helped them save the money which they would earlier spend on travel and medicines. Now they are able to spend this money on other productive activities, nutrition or education. Many patients had to borrow money from local money lenders on high interest rates. The MHUs brought a huge relief to them. Then there was lack of awareness among the people about ailments they were suffering from. There were instances where the patients were not aware that they were suffering from chronic osteoarthritis or diabetes for years surviving on pain killers or drugs prescribed by quacks. At many places the team met the asthma patients who never heard of inhalers.

In short, the intervention through MHUs have not only strengthened the health delivery system in these villages but also brought huge relief to a large chunk of poor and the marginalised who need medical facilities at their doorsteps.

LOCATIONS





Highlights -2016-18

Prakasam

Number of villages-12

Number of regular patients-7833

Overall figures:

2016-17: Diabetes Mellitus 7500 (19%), dyspepsia – gastritis 7368 (19%), hypertension 7280 (19%), joint Pain 5751 (15%), cough 2179 (6%), allergy 1256 (3%), acute conjunctivitis cataract 1253 (3%), chronic obstructive airway disease 1016 (3%), infection - Lower respiratory tract 975 (3%), fever 585 (2%), boil 531 (1%), shortness of breath 357 (1%), weakness – generalised 264 (1%), infection – Dermatological 173 (0%)

2017-18 : Hypertension 8286(23%), dyspepsia - gastritis 8099 (22%), Diabetes Mellitus 6998 (19%), Pain - joint 4459 (12%), infection - lower respiratory tract 2742 (8%), allergy 1507 (4%), cough 1494 (4%), acute conjunctivitis cataract 1046 (3%), boil 622 (2%), fever 314 (1%), diarrhea/dysentery/amoebic colitis 176 (0%), infection - urinary tract 152 (0%), headache 103, infection - Dermatological 76

Banka

Number of villages-11

Number of regular patients: 15663

Overall figures

2016-17: Joint- pain 9551 (36%), weakness (generalized) 3914 (15%), cough 3176 (12%), dyspepsia - gastritis 2599 (10%), Fever 2069 (8%), hypertension 1454 (5%), other provisional diagnosis 1176 (4%), scabies herpes eczema fungal infection 1169 (4%), constipation 621 (2%), musculo-skeletal chest pain 494 (2%), Asthma 458 (2%)

2017-18: Weakness (generalized) 12266 (31%), Joint- Pain 11574 (29%), other provisional diagnosis 3726 (9%), dyspepsia - gastritis 3288 (8%), cough 2695 (7%), fever 1843 (5%), hypertension 1389 (4%), Musculo-skeletal chest pain 951 (2%), asthma 820 (2%), scabies herpes eczema fungal infection 817 (2%), diabetes mellitus 171

IMPACT



In the last two years the MHUs at both locations emerged as pivot of community health delivery systems in 23 villages in Banka and Prakasam districts. All these villages are inhabited by the poor and the marginalised. Most of the people living in these villages are either small farmers or the labourers who are not able to bear the burgeoning health costs. Majority of the beneficiaries are suffering from diabetes, hypertension and joint pain which involve huge costs and is a major cause for financial crisis and a sharp cut in their productivity in terms of earning. After the launch of MHUs in these two districts, not only these major issues have been addressed to a large extent, but an overall awareness about the management of these major diseases has also took a pronounced tone among the people. Besides, MHUs also brought huge relief to the people suffering from general and the seasonal ailments.

Over 1,20,000 patients treated at doorsteps: These MHUs go to where people work and live, and are on the front line of high-risk communities. Majority of regular patients are suffering from multiple diseases such as diabetes, Hypertension, joint pain, lower respiratory tract infection (LRTI) and the gastritis. A large number of them are those who never got diagnosed earlier, but the symptoms showed that they were suffering from these diseases for a long time and were living without medicines. Since the majority live off daily wage earnings, very few can afford to have a day off to visit the hospitals which are 15-20 km away from these villages. The MHUs see approximately 60-70 patients every day. So far, more than 1,20,000 patients visited Prakasam and Banka MHUs in the past two years with more than 23,000 being the regular.

Reducing health costs: The intervention has substantially brought down the health costs for the families. A random survey conducted in the month of May, 2018 showed that the chronic patients spend approximately 37% of his/her monthly income on the diagnosis and medicines. Though both the regions have primary health care centers and public and private hospitals, they are not properly equipped and normally have shortage of medicines. While primary health care centers' role has been reduced to only vaccination, the government hospitals are generally overcrowded and lack adequate number of staff. Test labs in at these facilities are either poorly equipped or fail to give the results in time. There is a general perception among the masses that doctors in government hospitals prescribe tests in private labs which siphon off huge money out of slender pockets of the poor people. Only a few in the community can afford the treatment at private hospitals. A chronic patient suffering from multiple health disorders is saving Rs 4000-5000 which he would otherwise spend on medicines, blood tests and travel due to the MHUs interventions. Since there has been no improvement in the public health delivery system, MHUs in these regions have become all the more relevant.

Strengthening outreach: In the past two years, the MHUs at both the locations have reached out to the villages outside project areas whenever any request arrived. On every Saturday OPDs are conducted at the centers where approximately 150 patients come for treatment and blood tests. The patients also include those who don't live in the targeted villages. At times when the seasonal diseases occur, the MHUs spend extra time in the villages.

Providing dignity to elderly and women: Apart from reducing health costs and breaking geographical barriers, the MHUs have provided dignity to the poor, elderly and women who were suffering in silence. Many elderly who have been abandoned by their children due to their inability to bear their health costs are now getting free treatment. There have been cases of women opting for prostitution because their families do not have enough finance resources to meet the treatment expenses. Those who can't come to MHU location in the village because of physical immobility are treated at home. The MHU team visit a couple of patients with cerebral vascular accident (CVA) in Prakasam who are getting the treatment in cities but are dependent on MHU for regular check-ups and treatment for general diseases.

Enhancing productivity: There has been an overall impact on the productivity of the people who were not able to do their day to day work because of inaccessibility to good health facilities in the vicinity. If one talks to community people, this impact is quite visible in farms and households. A large number of people whose activities were restricted by one disease or the other are gradually coming back to work.

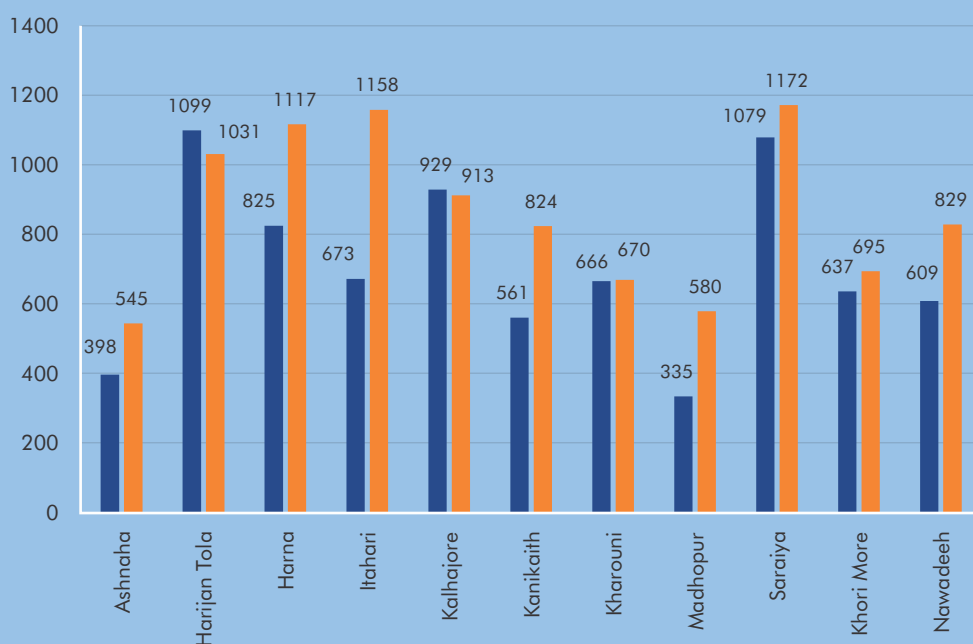
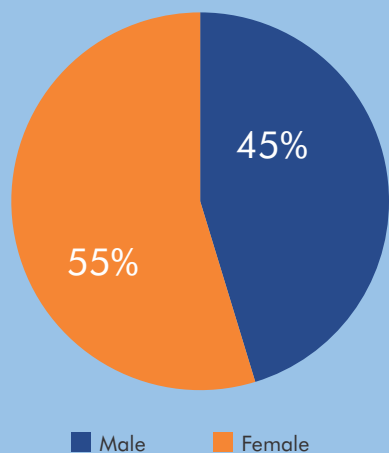


Annexures



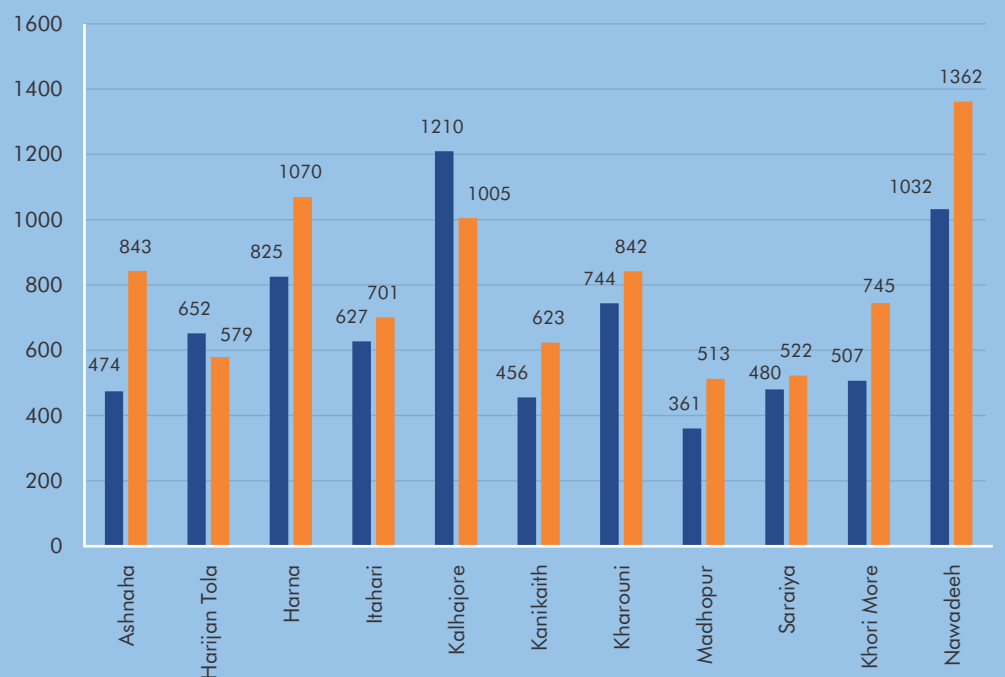
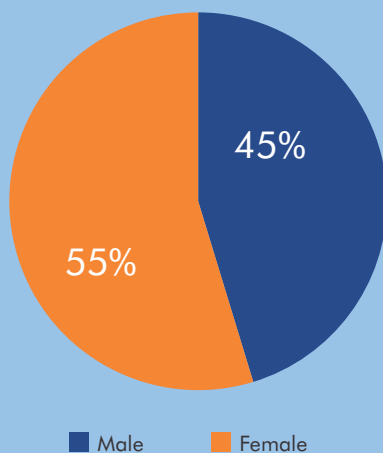
Banka MHU 2016-17

Sl. No.	Site Name	Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb		Mar	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	Ashnaha	71	34	36	32	28	25	17	14	25	22	23	58	20	39	32	68	44	99	47	82	28	38	27	34
2	Harijan Tola	71	98	55	66	62	70	64	82	48	50	119	73	104	93	114	93	132	106	95	95	116	104	119	101
3	Harna	62	73	47	56	90	86	43	62	50	62	68	162	53	79	90	123	64	74	95	120	99	141	64	79
4	Itahari	51	45	43	82	57	108	55	105	62	89	45	36	28	58	61	84	47	95	74	116	84	147	66	193
5	Kalhajore	51	83	65	78	70	129	73	114	91	82	95	84	104	90	90	58	111	64	70	47	63	51	46	37
6	Kanikaith	51	61	38	52	38	57	49	83	39	86	46	86	25	63	26	37	28	60	49	71	98	86	74	82
7	Kharouni	39	74	67	69	61	81	53	69	54	86	73	59	58	35	31	17	50	25	60	36	57	47	63	72
8	Madhopur	32	73	28	58	25	36	11	46	20	44	34	47	25	40	29	30	29	64	48	66	30	45	24	31
9	Saraiya	40	110	89	75	86	88	106	127	104	78	124	117	54	38	82	26	82	38	55	51	118	204	139	220
10	Khori More	85	61	43	55	34	55	36	47	47	70	80	97	45	45	62	40	65	76	47	65	49	50	44	34
11	Nawadeeh	76	112	45	57	45	56	43	50	53	74	73	45	60	68	50	96	45	65	38	58	42	76	39	72
	Total	629	824	556	680	596	791	550	799	593	743	780	864	576	648	667	668	697	766	678	807	784	989	705	955



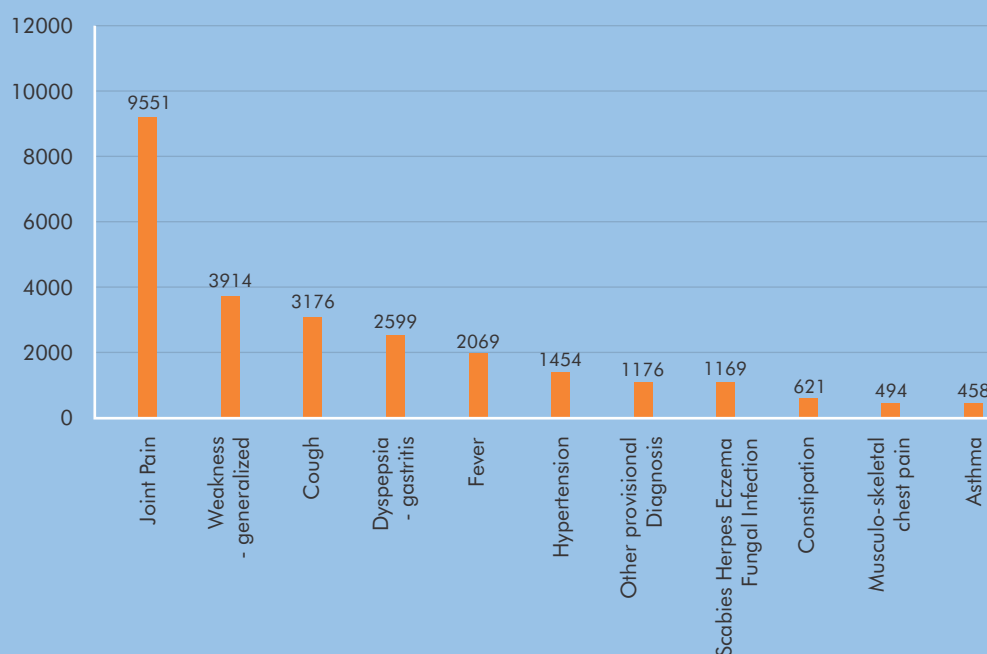
Banka MHU 2017-18

Sl. No.	Site Name	Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb		Mar	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	Ashnaha	34	115	80	153	77	100	43	48	43	59	33	51	42	77	37	39	25	47	33	58	7	46	20	50
2	Harijan Tola	86	54	53	41	32	70	3	6	10	17	46	17	56	33	86	51	86	88	85	121	60	57	49	24
3	Harna	69	89	77	71	62	66	41	34	62	38	54	46	55	43	81	59	88	111	101	196	59	151	76	166
4	Itahari	66	120	66	69	46	39	27	23	66	46	59	58	37	30	50	31	53	40	58	73	51	82	48	90
5	Kalhajore	99	83	110	101	92	101	98	110	111	95	109	92	80	34	96	64	117	79	84	63	100	90	114	93
6	Kanikaith	54	52	36	36	38	36	24	18	20	14	26	21	27	52	47	61	57	88	27	85	16	57	84	103
7	Kharouni	79	79	98	108	60	80	57	63	36	44	54	52	49	55	70	67	75	50	55	57	53	85	58	102
8	Madhopur	18	34	33	40	16	44	30	41	30	41	26	44	30	43	31	34	37	37	46	46	32	61	32	48
9	Saraiya	61	61	41	63	16	19	34	25	19	14	53	75	39	22	34	12	64	97	40	45	44	48	35	41
10	Khori More	27	22	75	112	47	97	15	23	46	54	65	53	32	35	51	56	46	93	35	47	14	37	54	116
11	Nawadeeh	24	31	17	29	51	114	45	79	90	79	116	121	112	137	139	168	107	152	103	161	120	161	108	130
	Total	617	740	686	823	537	766	417	470	533	501	641	630	559	561	722	642	755	882	667	952	556	875	678	963



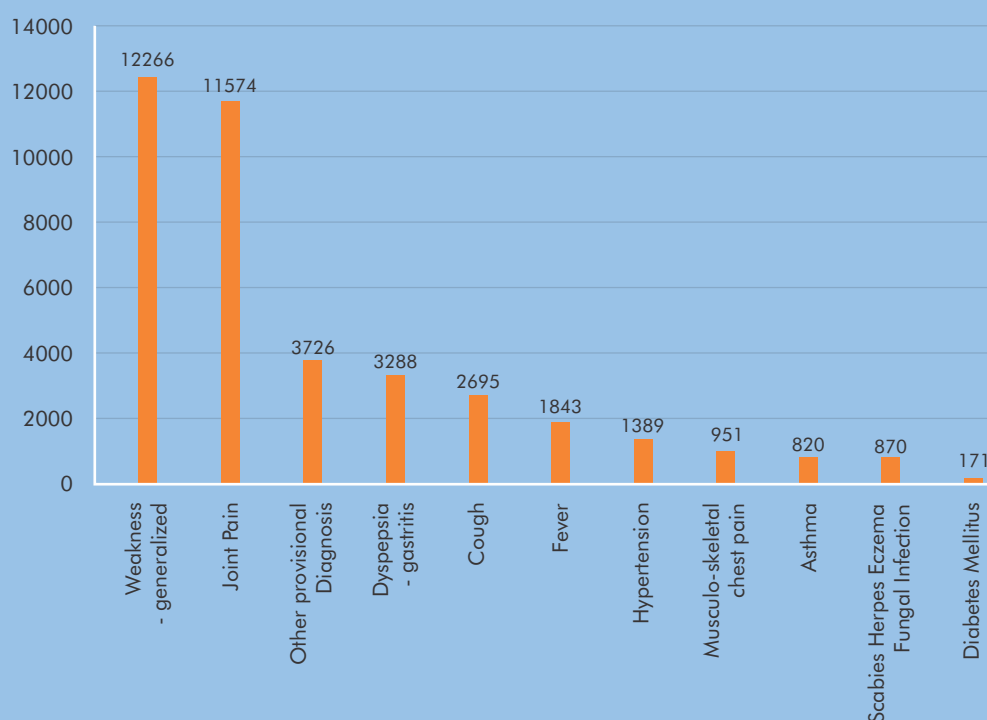
Banka Diseases Diagnosis 2016-17

	Feb 2016 - Apr 2016	May 2016 - Jul 2016	Aug 2016 - Oct 2016	Nov 2016 - Jan 2017	Grand Total
Joint- Pain	2226	1642	1825	2332	9551
Weakness - generalized	0	0	670	2551	3914
Cough	745	430	565	576	3176
Dyspepsia - gastritis	444	582	534	746	2599
Fever	391	400	536	389	2069
Hypertension	208	320	314	327	1454
Other provisional Diagnosis	0	0	581	595	1176
Scabies Herpes Eczema Fungal Infection	308	204	187	188	1169
Constipation	318	212	0	0	621
Musculo-skeletal chest pain	0	0	237	176	494
Asthma	158	0	0	119	458
Grand Total	4798	3790	5449	7999	26681



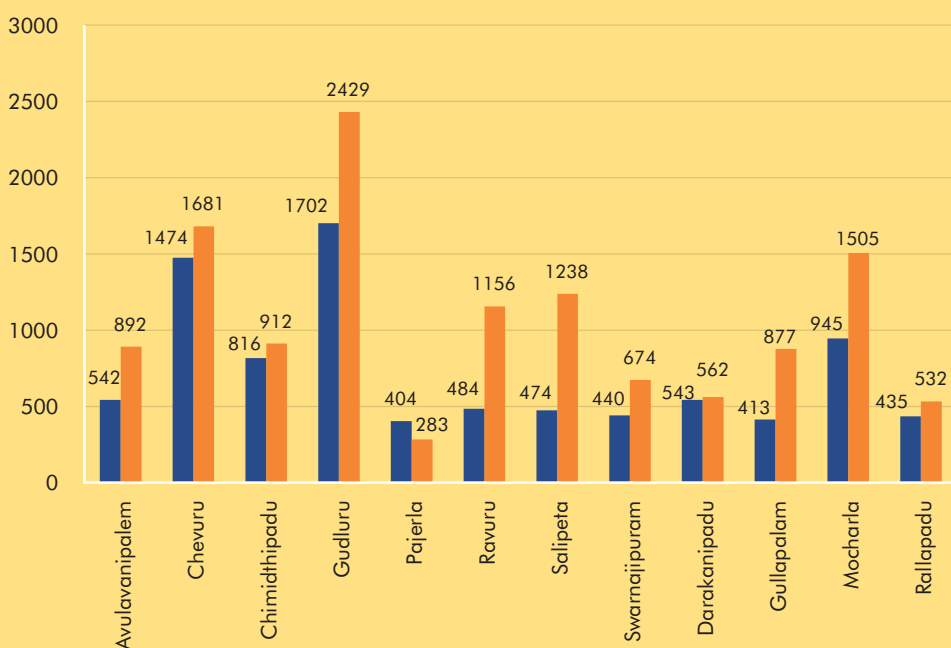
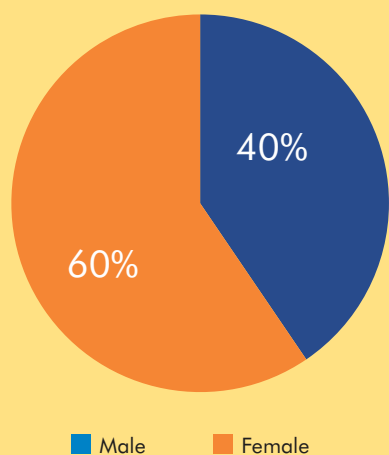
Banka Diseases Diagnosis 2017-18

	Feb 2017 - Apr 2017	May 2017 - Jul 2017	Aug 2017 - Oct 2017	Nov 2017 - Jan 2018	Feb 2018 - April 2018	Grand Total
Weakness - generalized	2714	2098	1910	2808	2736	12266
Joint- Pain	2526	1945	1783	2708	2582	11574
Other provisional Diagnosis	813	704	679	778	752	3726
Dyspepsia - gastritis	992	712	479	375	730	3288
Cough	530	339	370	585	871	2695
Fever	452	218	355	388	430	1843
Hypertension	284	221	224	294	366	1389
Musculo-skeletal chest pain	239	261	103	195	153	951
Asthma	228	191	150	251	0	820
Scabies Herpes Eczema Fungal Infection	164	115	132	239	167	817
Diabetes Mellitus	0	0	0	0	171	171
Grand Total	8972	6804	6185	8621	8958	39540



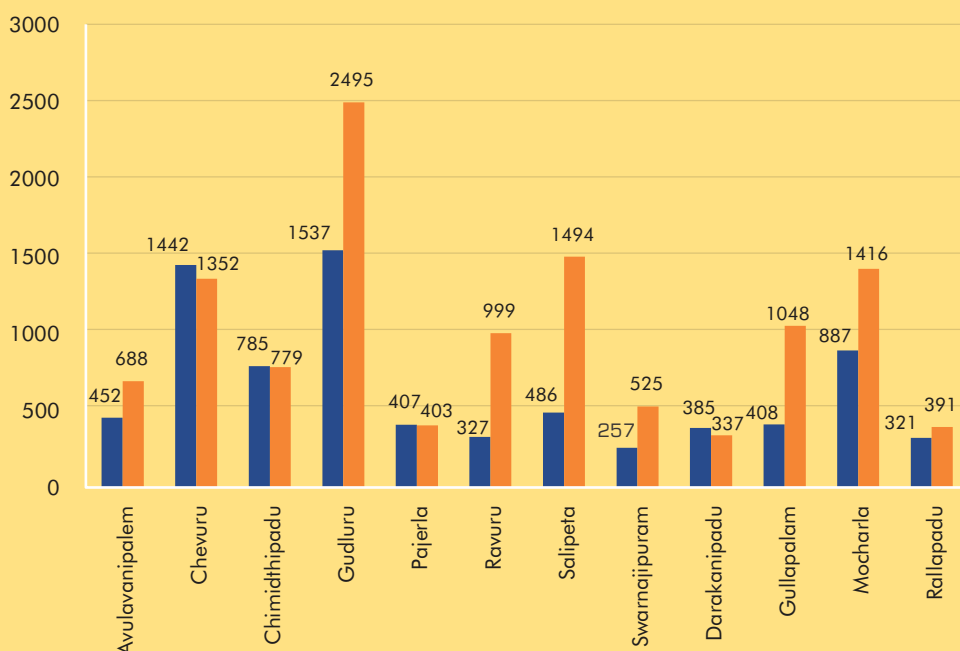
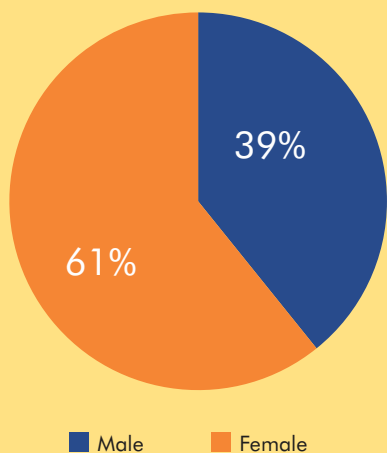
Prakasam MHU 2016-17

Sl. No.	Site Name	Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb		Mar	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	Avulavanipalem	161	272	433	161	272	433	1	0	5	2	4	3	6	5	1	0	3	1	55	84	41	77	47	79
2	Chevuru	432	492	924	432	492	924	6	15	11	10	15	10	15	9	12	21	16	19	96	139	113	122	103	133
3	Chimidhipadu	190	236	426	190	236	426	6	6	9	15	6	12	10	14	10	14	8	12	73	84	55	75	63	75
4	Gudluru	392	569	961	392	569	961	39	44	21	14	27	25	15	17	34	40	28	25	154	167	176	219	184	236
5	Pajerla	80	52	132	80	52	132	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	34	17	56	39	43	26
6	Ravuru	165	330	495	165	330	495	7	8	13	14	5	14	7	11	6	12	1	0	30	81	30	92	42	108
7	Salipeta	100	265	365	100	265	365	0	0	4	6	5	7	5	4	5	4	3	4	58	129	51	113	43	103
8	Swarnajipuram	118	170	288	118	170	288	7	6	7	9	5	9	7	6	2	5	1	0	44	69	34	58	31	56
9	Darakanipadu	132	163	295	132	163	295	0	0	0	1	5	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	38	24	35	40	51	46
10	Gullapalam	73	185	258	73	185	258	0	0	5	1	15	18	2	1	0	8	0	0	40	64	25	41	33	80
11	Mocharla	245	359	604	245	359	604	8	9	7	6	11	18	6	13	6	6	6	9	61	76	73	120	81	153
12	Rallapadu	139	164	303	139	164	303	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	2	0	1	20	43	35	32	42	49
	Total	2227	3257	5484	2227	3257	5484	74	88	82	78	100	121	78	84	81	112	66	71	703	977	724	1028	763	1144



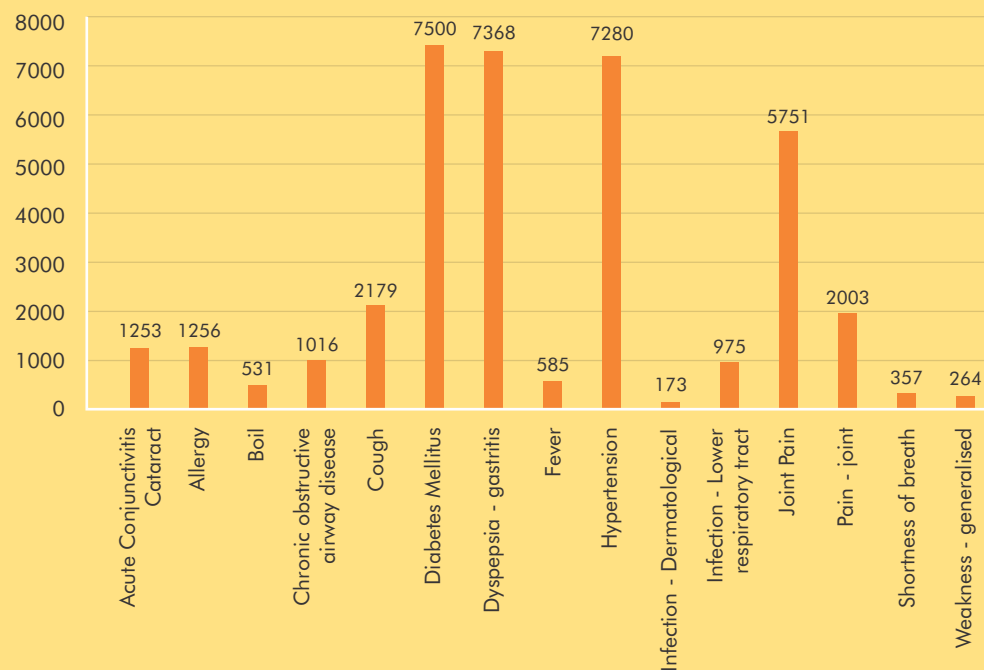
Prakasam MHU 2017-18

Sl. No.	Site Name	Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb		Mar	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	Avulavanipalem	48	72	53	78	33	57	42	64	17	20	49	70	38	52	38	66	43	62	36	59	29	41	26	47
2	Chevuru	102	102	113	140	112	110	116	108	121	102	127	91	127	105	174	161	109	97	149	135	94	104	98	97
3	Chimidhipadu	62	64	61	71	50	55	63	55	56	65	76	55	100	86	84	78	70	68	51	47	51	57	61	78
4	Gudluru	205	259	132	191	129	216	150	239	104	158	82	152	109	198	115	223	155	282	116	177	104	180	136	220
5	Pajerla	18	9	24	20	51	37	40	36	35	35	43	55	20	21	45	34	35	32	26	38	33	51	37	35
6	Ravuru	31	89	35	91	25	82	12	76	26	75	21	73	30	82	32	106	39	91	27	85	22	78	27	71
7	Salipeta	33	117	41	143	26	85	60	170	26	90	42	146	49	139	48	124	36	102	42	122	29	100	54	156
8	Swarnajipuram	20	49	20	56	22	51	30	53	18	38	24	55	34	40	20	35	19	47	16	31	14	29	20	41
9	Darakanipadu	14	25	30	20	46	39	31	37	18	15	39	33	41	42	27	22	36	22	34	27	36	31	33	24
10	Gullapalam	18	49	29	66	60	116	37	93	24	53	41	114	32	83	35	89	45	117	35	96	37	86	15	86
11	Mocharla	32	60	47	78	91	150	81	129	98	110	89	130	66	119	93	158	63	107	78	109	73	113	76	153
12	Rallapadu	18	25	19	20	43	39	33	40	26	35	26	46	25	28	26	42	33	27	25	31	26	40	21	18
	Total	601	920	604	974	688	1037	695	1100	569	796	659	1020	671	995	737	1138	683	1054	635	957	548	910	604	1026



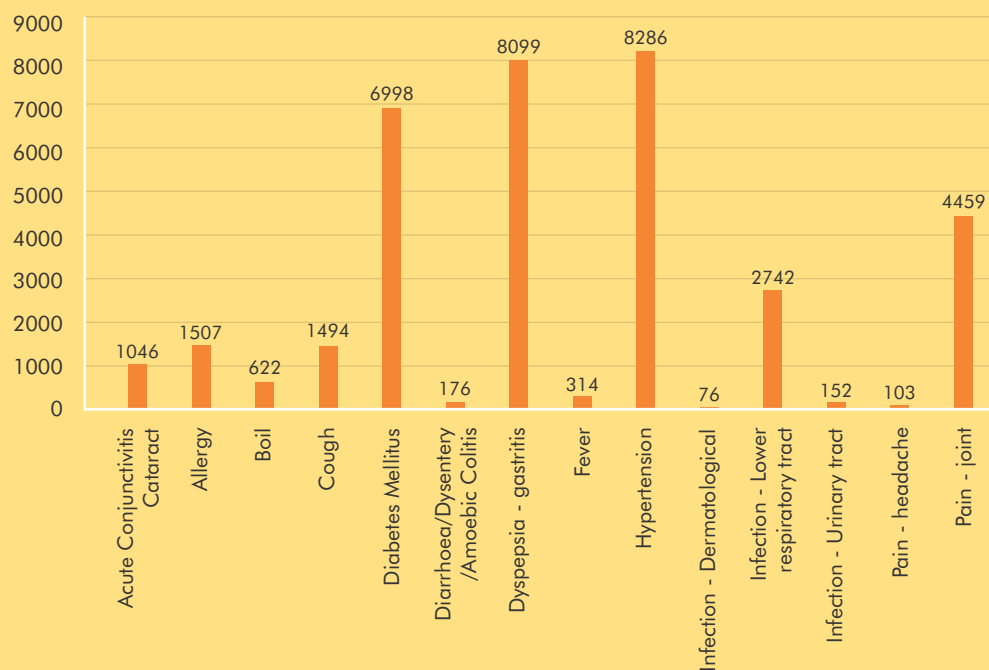
Prakasam Diseases Diagnosis 2016-17

	Apr - Jun 2016	Jul - Sep 2016	Oct - Dec 2016	Jan - Mar 2017	Grand Total
Acute Conjunctivitis Cataract	306	287	309	351	1253
Allergy	324	337	334	261	1256
Boil	98	137	86	210	531
Chronic obstructive airway disease	444	131	441	0	1016
Cough	385	557	385	879	2179
Diabetes Mellitus	1907	1830	1896	1867	7500
Dyspepsia - gastritis	1625	2107	1652	1984	7368
Fever	92	199	92	202	585
Hypertension	1645	1990	1701	1944	7280
Infection - Dermatological	0	173	0	0	173
Infection - Lower respiratory tract	0	274	0	701	975
Joint Pain	1929	1905	1917	0	5751
Pain - joint	0	0	0	2003	2003
Shortness of breath	175	0	182	0	357
Weakness - generalised	132	0	132	0	264
Grand Total	9035	9927	9127	10402	38491



Prakasam Diseases Diagnosis 2017-18

	Apr - Jun 2017	Jul - Sep 2017	Oct - Dec 2017	Jan - Mar 2018	Grand Total
Acute Conjunctivitis Cataract	297	236	287	226	1046
Allergy	429	291	395	392	1507
Boil	120	193	141	168	622
Cough	333	603	558	0	1494
Diabetes Mellitus	1785	1637	1880	1696	6998
Diarrhoea/Dysentery/Amoebic Colitis	0	126	0	50	176
Dyspepsia - gastritis	2221	2025	1984	1869	8099
Fever	0	195	119	0	314
Hypertension	1938	2010	2301	2037	8286
Infection - Dermatological	0	0	0	76	76
Infection - Lower respiratory tract	687	658	741	656	2742
Infection - Urinary tract	0	0	90	62	152
Pain - headache	103	0	0	0	103
Pain - joint	1524	1363	1572	0	4459
Grand Total	9437	9337	10068	7232	36074



PRAKASAM

CASE STUDIES





Name

T Venkat Rao

Age

48

Village

Swarnajipuram

Venkat Rao is bedridden since he suffered brain stroke four months ago while working at a construction site. Diagnosed with CVA with his right side completely paralysed, Rao is getting the major treatment in a nearby hospital, but still needs a routine check- up which is a huge challenge as the hospital is almost 16 km away.

The MHU team visits his house once a week for his health check- up which include BP, joints pain because of immobility and the bed sores. This has made it easier for him to update the hospital about his condition and the progress. Sometimes even the MHU doctor apprises the hospital of the complications that he faces occasionally. The MHU team also passes on the advice from the hospital to his family.

“I am thankful to the MHU team that they visit my house purely out of compassion. They do my health routine health check-up. It helps me remain informed about my condition. They also provide me gel for the joint pain and other minor complications”, he said.



Name

V Ravamma

Age

76

Village

Gundlapalem

V Ravamma, a widow, who is living with her daughter after her son abandoned her, is suffering from hypertension for the last 25 years along with lower respiratory tract infection (LRTI). The old age has also come with severe joint pains for her.

Ravamma is getting Rs 1000 as old age pension, but that is not enough to take care of her health needs. She used to visit the nearby hospital for treatment which is almost 15 km away. For the last five years her health conditions and the financial crisis prevented her from getting treatment regularly. Going to hospital meant spending Rs 4000-5,000 every month on medicines and travel. Not only this, nobody was willing to take her to the hospital. Her daughter who works as daily wage labourer could not afford to lose a day's earning accompanying her to the hospital.

But with the MHU visiting the village every week, she is getting the regular medicines which often were not available in the hospital. Now she is getting medicines for BP including inhaler (bronchodilator) to control her asthma and gel for her joint pain without bothering to go to the hospital.

"Sometimes when I am not able to come to the van, the doctor and the other staff visits her personally. With the regular medicines and the blood and other tests I am getting better and giving more time to my daily activities. Not only this, I am saving the entire money I was spending on my treatment till two years ago", she said.



Name

K Lakshamaiah

Age

76

Village

Chemiditapadu

There are many in Gudalur block villages who came to know about their other medical conditions other than the existing ones much later. Lakshamaiah is one of them. Initially diagnosed for lower respiratory tract infection, Lakshamaiah learnt that he is suffering from high blood pressure and diabetes too at later stage.

He lost his wife 32 years ago and is dependent on his sister as his four sons refused to take care of him. Her sister who is a daily wage labourer and owns one acre of land is able to provide him only food. As far as his health is concerned he would either suffer in silence or would beg for help.

He has been coming to the MHU for the treatment ever since the facility began in the village. Lakshamaiah who was not even aware of his medical conditions has been sensitized by the MHU staff as how to manage the multiple disorders he is suffering from. But the biggest relief was the free diagnosis and the medicines being provided by MHU.



Name

T Kondamma

Age

59

Village

Swarnajipuram

Till two years ago, Kondamma would travel to Nellore, almost 90 km from her village for the treatment of cerebral vascular accident (CVA). Her other medical conditions -diabetes, hypertension, joints pain, gastritis- made it almost difficult for her to go that far.

The monthly expenditure including travel was Rs 2,800 which was huge given the fact she is dependent on the old age pension of her husband who also works as a daily wage labourer.

She has been coming to the MHU regularly for the last two years. Recalling her earlier days, Kondamma says that going regularly to Nellore for treatment and medicines was not easy as it would mean the loss of her husband's one day wage.

"As I have physical abnormalities after being diagnosed with CVA, I sometimes can't even reach the MHU location in the village. But the MHU team comes to my house for my health check up and medicines after seeing other patients. I am really touched by this gesture", Kondamma said.



Name

T Dhayamma

Age

69

Village

Gundlapalem

Sixty two-year old Dhayamma suffered Cerebral Vascular Accident (CVA) 17 years ago. CVA is a medical condition when blood flow to a part of brain is stopped either by a blockage or the rupture of a blood vessel. If left untreated it can lead to many physical abnormalities.

She was spending almost Rs 60,000 per year, often forcing her to borrow money from the local money lenders. Her two sons who work as construction labourers could not afford the treatment. At times she would live without medicines for days on end.

Her abnormalities did not allow her to visit the hospital regularly. But after the community health intervention through MHU, she no longer has to go to the hospital except for some major tests occasionally.

She said that the MHU has brought a big relief to her given her physical conditions. It has not only taken a huge financial burden off her head, but has also helped her live with dignity.



Name

D Lakamma

Age

76

Village

Swarnajipuram

Suffering from multiple disorders such as hypertension, diabetes, joints pain, hypercholesterolemia and lower respiratory tract infection, D Lakamma got major support from MHU in terms of free medicines and regular tests. All this was not possible with Rs 7000 that her son earns monthly.

She was diagnosed with diabetes and hypertension six years ago. But it was only after she approached MHU she learnt that she is suffering from other medical conditions like increased cholesterol and bronchitis too.

D Lakamma who works as a daily wage labourer says that with her son unable to look after her, the life had become huge burden as she has no other source of income. She has been regularly coming to MHU for the last three years for treatment.

“Earlier I was spending Rs 2500 per month on the visits to hospitals and the medicines for BP and asthma. There were times when I was not able to buy the medicines and my condition deteriorated. Now I am happy that I am getting treated at my door step and that too free of costs”, she said.

BANKA CASE STUDIES





Name
Sita Devi

Age
32

Village
Parman

Thirty two-year old Sita Devi was struggling with boils for the last ten years. They would appear on one or the other parts of the body and at times would spread to the entire body. Completely dependent on the quack or the unqualified doctor in the village, she spent lot of time and money. She was taking huge dose of antibiotics without going for blood tests. Sometimes she would have even fever.

She approached the MHU location six months back and was immediately advised to go for the blood tests which were done at the MHU lab. The results showed that she was suffering from blood infection due to problems with the immune system, Poor nutrition and poor hygiene.

Sita Devi, who along with her husband works as daily wage labourer, has two sons and three daughters. According to her own calculations, she must have had spent more than Rs 10,000 on the doctors (quacks) fee and the medicines before coming to MHU. At times she had to borrow the money from the local money lenders which she is still paying.

“Now I have got huge relief. Not only am I getting better, but has freed myself from the clutches of quacks who were making fool of me”, she said.



Name

Dulari Devi

Age

50

Village

Parman

Dulari Devi too was exploited by the village quack making her doll out more than Rs 6,000 in the past one and half year. She is suffering from joint pain due to increased uric acid. "I would pay Rs 200 to the village quack plus the cost of the medicines."

She has been regularly coming to MHU for the last two months and is recovering well after medicines and the dietary changes suggested by the doctor. Now her uric acid is under control with physical mobility getting better by the time.

Dulari Devi said that before MHU was launched in the region, the villagers had no option but to approach the village doctor for even minor disorder as the hospital is almost 15 km away and is normally overcrowded. The primary health center does no more than the vaccination and remains closed most of the time.

She further said that her four sons are living separately leaving her and her husband fending for themselves. As she and husband are daily wage labourers even a small disease can deprive them of the daily earning which is so vital for survival.

"The joint pain would keep me away from work for days. But for the last two months the situation is changing. I am getting relief and going to work regularly", Dulari said with glee in her eyes.



Name

Ganesh Mandal

Age

61

Village

Barahat Block

Though Ganesh belongs to Barahat block of Banka district, but comes to Parman village every two weeks for the treatment because of rising health costs. He is suffering from type II diabetes and hypertension since 2003.

He is coming to MHU regularly for the last nine months. Ever since he started getting treatment, Ganesh is showing improvement and now his sugar level is under control. The MHU has come as a boon to him given the huge amount of money he already spent on his treatment by unqualified doctor.

“You can't always go to the city hospitals at this age. This involves huge costs for people like us. Ever since the MHU started coming to this village, all my family members also get treatment here whenever required”, he said. Ganesh has three sons and three daughters.

Recently he developed ankle pain for which the MHU doctor has prescribed blood tests and given some medicines along with gel for now. According to him, the major difference he has observed after the MHU intervention is awareness about the diseases that the people are suffering from. Earlier, the people were not even aware of their diseases. They include large number of people suffering from diabetes and hypertension.



Name

Rukmani Kumari

Age

8

Village

Jhalar

Imagine an eight year-old suffering from vaginal infection for the last six years without the family knowing about it. Rukmani Kumari lost her mother and is living with her grandmother who herself is suffering from vaginal infection. While the MHU doctor attribute this to the lack of hygiene, both have been prescribed other blood tests also.

Both Rukmani and her grandmother were taking medicines from the local village doctor, but did not get any relief. Her grandmother is paralytic and father could not afford their treatment in a good hospital and bear the cost of the medicines. Recently, the little house in which the family was living got burnt while the drought consumed the crop which could fetch them some money.

Worse, their ration card was also burnt in fire, so the family struggling to make both ends meet. "With all this happening to the family one after the other, there is little left for the treatment", said her 50-year old grandmother Munawati Devi.

"But now both of us are getting good treatment. Our condition is much better now. The child is now going to the anganwadi every day and I am also able to do the daily chores without bothering about the treatment costs", she added.



Name

Parmanand Pundit

Age

60

Village

Saran

Sixty-year old Parmanand Pundit is suffering from multiple diseases- Hypertension, joint pain and gastritis. He was diagnosed with hypertension and the joint pain five and eight ago respectively.

He has been getting treatment at MHU for the last one year. Earlier he had to go to Bhagalpur, 70 km away from Saran. Like many others who are regular at MHU, Parmanand too spent a lot on the medicines and the travel. Now he can get the tests done and see the doctor every week at MHU location in the village.

With the regular treatment his condition is now getting better and now he can work on his farms more efficiently. "Joint pain is common in the village and most of the farmers face a great difficulty working on farms. Most of us can't afford go to the city for treatment. Not only does it consume the whole day, one has to bear the travel and medicine cost" he said.

Parmanand said that MHU has brought a great relief to the farmers who are already reeling under farm debt. "They have to spend a lot on the health but delay in the payment for their produce prevent them from getting treatment", he added.



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