

Health strategy in South State of India – Towards older people

Dear Editor,

With great interest, we read the article by Asadzadeh M *et al.*^[1] We tried to add certain strategies being followed recently in south state of India. The changing epidemiology of health and disease poses various challenges to the world's healthcare system. There are numerous healthcare programs and subprograms, policies and legislations. Despite possessing one of the world's largest public healthcare delivery systems, Indian health indices paint a bleak image when compared to worldwide targets.^[2] Recently, the Tamil Nadu government has implemented the Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam Scheme or Doorstep Healthcare System, which provides doorstep healthcare services to Tamil Nadu residents and eliminates the need for patients to visit hospitals for treating noncommunicable disease. The main objective of the scheme is to provide individuals with necessary medications and bring medical services to their homes. Furthermore, a specific emphasis will be maintained on patients with diabetes and hypertension and older citizens in the state who require physiotherapy. This scheme was inaugurated concurrently across seven districts in Tamil Nadu. This scheme was created to give door-to-door health services to residents of the state over the age of forty-five. Over fifty universal healthcare blocks, the scheme seeks to reach thousand hundred and seventy two health subcentres, hundred and eighty nine primary health care centres and fifty community health centres in Tamilnadu.^[3-5]

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) have surpassed infectious diseases as the primary source of disease burden worldwide between 1990 and 2016, as measured by disability-adjusted life years, a trend that is anticipated to continue due to ageing populations. Individuals, families and communities face terrible health impacts as a result of the NCDs epidemic, which threatens to overburden healthcare systems.^[6] The socioeconomic consequences of NCDs make disease prevention and control a crucial development requirement for the twenty-first century. The National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE) programme by Government of India provides preventive, therapeutic and rehabilitative services to the older adults at all levels of the country's healthcare delivery system.^[6] Individuals and communities accessing necessary health treatments without financial hardship have gained traction with all United Nations member states pledging to Universal Health Coverage (UHC) by 2030 as part of the SDGs.^[7,8] The Global Health Sector Strategies

2022-2030 seek to accomplish a shared goal of eliminating epidemics and expanding universal health coverage, primary health care and health security in a world where everyone has access to high-quality evidence-based people-centred health services and can live healthy and productive lives. The World Health Organization's (WHO) mission is to provide leadership and an evidence base for worldwide action on NCD surveillance, prevention and control.^[8]

India has made significant progress in several aspects, like increasing life expectancy to 65 years old and reducing newborn mortality, maternal mortality and death rates considerably.^[8,9] The birth rate is likewise declining. To provide healthcare services to many remote locations of the country, the number of doctors, health clinics and nurses has increased. The success of these is attributed to increasing penetration of healthcare facilities, improved vaccines, better literacy and new initiatives of government and private sector activities.^[10,11] As primary healthcare facilities are always crowded with people of all ages, the elderly were vulnerable to illness, long lines and hours in consultation and acquiring drugs from pharmacies would be difficult for them. Disease transmission by infection is reduced when health-related services are provided to individuals particularly the elderly who do not need to travel, do not need to wait for consultations and do not need to stand in line to buy drugs at a primary healthcare facility or private or government healthcare facility and they will be benefited from all available health facilities. The delivery of medicines benefits both patients who are unable to walk out and obtain the drugs (particularly during COVID-19) and e-pharmacies and online marketplaces that sell such drugs. The success of this programme will encourage other organizations on a worldwide scale to start similar programmes.

Diagnose the illness, trace its cause, seek the proper remedy and apply it with skill.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

**Pugazhenthian Thangaraju¹,
Hemasri Velmurugan¹,
Sajitha Venkatesan²**

¹Department of Pharmacology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India,
²Department of Microbiology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India

Address for correspondence: Dr. Pugazhenthana Thangaraju,
Department of Pharmacology, All India Institute of Medical
Sciences (AIIMS), Raipur - 492 099, Chhattisgarh, India.
E-mail: drpugal23@gmail.com

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