

Gudalur Adivasi Hospital

Newsletter 2004

The ASHWINI team from Gudalur wishes you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. We want to thank you once again for your encouragement and continued support over the past year.

Looking Back . . .

The focus of work over the last 14 years was to encourage tribals to take an increased interest and concern in their own healthcare.

Having established their own hospital and healthcare system they now access these facilities with confidence. This year has been our busiest with a 73% bed utilization rate at the hospital.

The past year's activities . . .

Training of Village Health Volunteers: Our target is to ensure that there is a trained health volunteer in each village who will take responsibility for the health of the village. The number of volunteers has grown from 100 last years to 176 this year.

Pushpa, a young Kattunaikkan girl, from Moolakkad was dying from pneumonia & severe anemia. Her family was too scared to seek medical care. Madhi, the health volunteer from Moolakkad, came to the area center late one evening requesting health animators Parasu and Urvasi accompany her immediately. The team went in a jeep and transferred Pushpa to our hospital. An immediate blood transfusion and antibiotics saved her life. Pushpa is back in school today, thanks to Madhi.

Health Animators: This team continues to work with commitment and enthusiasm taking on more and more responsibilities each year. The 11 new trainees recruited last year are being nurtured by Drs. Bharat and Deepa. In sharp contrast to previous years, there has been only one dropout. They have an incredible amount of enthusiasm and willingness to learn, and teaching them has been a pleasure!

The Hospital: The renovations are over and our hospital has a bright airy feel. Last year we saw over 10,000 Outpatients, 53% tribals. Specialty clinics in ENT, General Medicine, Geriatrics and Dentistry, besides Surgery, Obstetrics & Gynecology continue to be held.



Some of the Trainees

The Staff: This year we welcomed aboard Dr. Sunil, a physician. He was chief of Geriatrics at Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences in Cochin. Drs Bharat and Deepa will be completing their contract with Skillshare and returning to the UK next March. We are going to miss them.

Student Elective Program: This year saw the launch of our Medical Student Elective program with the help of the Charities Advisory Trust, a UK based charity. Our first batch of students - 3 Irish and 2 English- arrived in August.

Kevin O'Brien, an Irish medical student, wrote:
'the month was probably the best of my medical education to date and has really provoked me to think about many other aspects of society as well. The people I've met here are possibly the nicest, most dedicated and most inspirational crowd I have ever come across and I hope that I can maintain contact with them and the hospital. Thanks a million for everything!'

A website www.medicalstudentelectives.org has been created.

Health Insurance: In the past few years there has been a great deal of interest in India about health insurance schemes for the poor. ASHWINI's insurance scheme, being one of the few projects running successfully for over 14 years, has been the object of study by a number of people.

Funding Support . . .

Organizations like Charities Advisory Trust; Indians for Collective Action, Vidyalaya.org Foundation Inc., Physicians Against World Hunger and TheToshniwall Trust as well as many individual donors continue to support us.

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation was a major donor for the past three years. Their funding is coming to an end this year, so we are looking for new partners to work with.

Skillshare International continues its support of the health-training program.

Sir Ratan Tata Trust (S.R.T.T) supports the insurance program.

Corpus Fund: Thanks to our staunch supporters this has reached **Rs 9.2 lakhs**. We still have a long way to go to reach our target of **Rs 100 lakhs** (US\$200,000) to ensure stability of our health care system.

Moving Ahead . . .

The slow but steady process of community ownership of the health program is under way. The challenge is to retain this focus when new programs and activities are planned. It is most encouraging to see the commitment and involvement of the entire team including the volunteers in making this dream a reality.

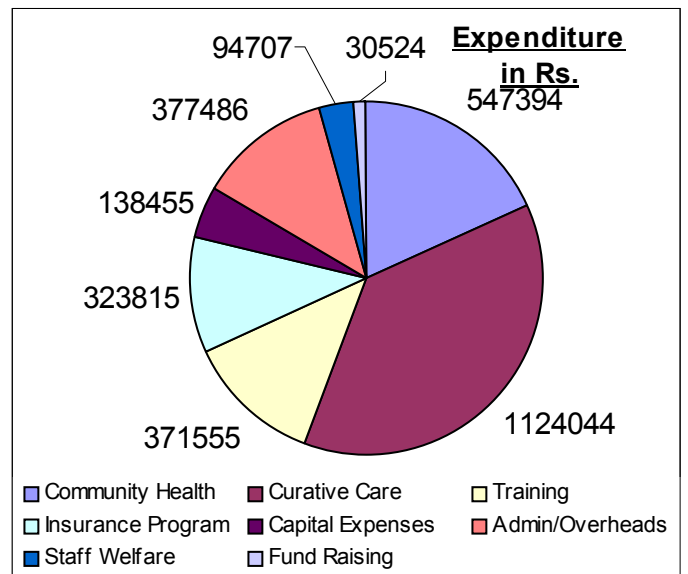
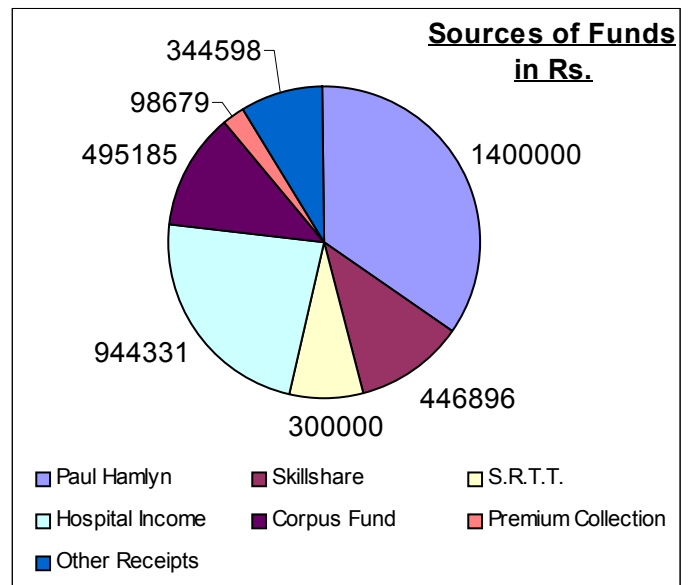
Progress in other sectors . . .

The Education program has really taken off with the presence of the village education workers. School going has now increased by 200%!

Just Change has started functioning with the trading of rice and tea between communities.

The Adivasi Tea Leaf Marketing Society with about 400 families as members is running smoothly. It is totally managed by the people and is making a profit.

The Adivasi festival this year was a great success as usual. There was much singing and dancing.



Donations in India are exempt from income tax under section 80G of the income tax act.

For tax deductible donations in the US, please route checks through Vidyalay.org Foundation Inc, 35 Mayer Drive, Clifton, NJ 07012

In the UK donations can be "Gift aided" through Charities Advisory Trust, Radius Works, Back Lane, Hampstead, London. NW 31 HL

Merry Christmas!
Have a Happy and Prosperous New Year!!

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