

Government Engagement

District Health Officer, Tumakuru, launches Eligible Couples Card

Dr Manjunath D N, District Health Officer (DHO) of the Department of Health & Family Welfare, Tumakuru, launched the Eligible Couples (EC) Card on August 7, 2024, in Tumakuru block. This initiative, supported by KHPT and funded by Wipro Cares, is part



■ **Launching of Eligible Couples card by DHO at Tumakuru**

of the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) pilot project aimed at strengthening pre-conception care (PCC). The EC Card is an innovative tool to provide essential information on nutrition, pregnancy planning, health screenings, and available services at Health and Wellness Centres/Primary Health Centres. It also serves as a health record for couples planning to start a family. During the event, the DHO issued the EC Card to an Eligible Couple present at the event and addressed ASHA workers, encouraging them to effectively use the card in counseling efforts. Around **250** ASHAs from Tumakuru block were trained in two separate batches to use the card as a tool for guiding couples on pre-conception care.

The event saw the participation of key representatives from various government

departments, including Reproductive & Child Health, Department of Health & Family Welfare, Department of Women & Child Development, as well as the Factory Head of Santoor Factory and the Program Head of Wipro Cares, Bengaluru.



■ **DHO issuing the Eligible Couples Card to an Eligible Couple at the event**

KHPT launches its project to address anaemia and malnutrition in Mysuru and Kolar districts

On July 20, KHPT held a district-level launch event for the “Accelerated Efforts to Improve Nutrition Across the Continuum of Care Through a Convergence-Based Multi-Sectoral Approach” project funded by ITC



■ **Project launching event to address anaemia and malnutrition at Mysuru Zilla Panchayat Bhavana**

Mysuru Zilla Panchayat Bhavana. The event featured key officials of Mysuru including Reproductive and Child Health Officer; Zilla Panchayat Deputy Secretary (Development); Deputy Director of Public Instruction; along with 81 participants, including representatives from the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department (RDPR), Women and Child Development (WCD), Health, and Education Departments.

Mr Mohan H L, CEO of KHPT, stressed the importance of collaboration in project implementation, while Dr Prarthana BS, thematic Lead for MNCH at KHPT, highlighted the connection between anaemia and nutrition, and Mr Rajiv S, Project Lead, outlined the project activities including anaemia and malnutrition screening using digital non-invasive haemoglobinometers.

On August 7, a similar district-level project launch event and training for trainers was held in Kolar, presided over by Sri Venkatachalapathi DS, Kolar ZP, along with key dignitaries such as Shri Vamshi Krishna (WCD), Dr Ramesh Babu (THO, WCD), Shri Muthu Krishna Murthy (GM, ITC Malur), Ms Priyanka Mitra (Program Executive, ITC MSK-Karnataka), and Ms Agnita RN (Strategic Lead, KHPT). The event was attended by **74** participants from Kolar District.



■ **Demonstration of digital non-invasive haemoglobinometer**

KHPT launches the project “Sankalp” in Koppal district



■ **DHO, Koppal, inaugurates the district-level launch of Project “Sankalp”**

On July 10, 2024, KHPT in partnership with St. John’s Research Institute (SJRI) held the district-level launch for the project, “Sankalp: Strengthening Program Implementation and Monitoring to Achieve Single-digit Neonatal Mortality”. The event featured an orientation for district-level government officers, including the District Health Officer (DHO), Reproductive and Child Health Officer (RCHO), specialists (neonatologists, obstetricians), Community Health Officers (CHOs), M&E officers, ASHA facilitators, ASHA mentors, and the St. John’s Research Institute (SJRI) team. Discussions focused on the study’s objectives and challenges in reducing neonatal mortality, covering strategies for the four-phase Implementation Research process: formative research, co-development,

full-scale implementation, and evaluation. Participants also explored six key intervention pillars: preconception and antenatal care, labor and childbirth, newborn care, care for small/sick newborns, and post-newborn survival. Non-formal interviews were also held to help in identifying gaps in the current system.

Kunigal Health Department Mandates Monthly 'Eligible Couples Day' to Strengthen Pre-Conception Care

KHPT has successfully conceptualized Eligible Couples (EC) Day, an event to sensitize eligible

couples who are planning to have a child. This is an initiative to strengthen Pre-Conception Care (PCC). Recognizing its positive impact, Dr. Mariappa, the Taluka Health Officer of Kunigal, issued a circular directing all Health and Wellness Centres to observe "EC Day" on the 3rd Wednesday of every month, ensuring focus on PCC across Kunigal. This achievement has been made possible through the partnership between Healthium, KHPT and continued support from the Kunigal health department, Tumakuru, Karnataka.



■ Eligible Couple Day organized at the Health and Wellness Centre, Kunigal, Tumakuru

Capacity Building

Capacity Building for front line workers (FLWs) of Ambernath Block, Thane, Mumbai

On July 29, KHPT, in collaboration with its partner organization Foundation for Mother and Child Health (FMCH), facilitated an



■ Training of ASHAs of Ambernath Block on KMC in Thane, Mumbai.

orientation and training program for ASHAs from Ambernath Rural & Urban blocks to enhance their knowledge and skills for implementing Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) for low birth weight (LBW) babies. The event was inaugurated by the Block development Officer (BDO), Thakula Health officer (THO), Medical Officer (MO), and other officials of Ambernath Parishad.

The training session highlighted the importance of Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC), emphasizing the correct techniques for skin-to-skin contact to promote infant warmth and weight gain, improve breastfeeding and emotional bonding. KMC is a cost-effective intervention and ASHAs' play an important role in newborn care by ensuring the

application of these practices by the mother and family. Despite heavy rains, **183** ASHAs (95.3% attendance) participated in the training program along with **12** Mahila Arogya Samithi members and **13** Self-Help Group members from Ambernath and Badlapur blocks.



■ Participants in the capacity-building training on KMC in Thane

KHPT holds stakeholder engagement workshop to address Stillbirth Reduction strategies in Haveri

KHPT organized a stakeholder engagement workshop on July 31, 2024, in Haveri as part of the "Implementation Research to Develop



■ Workshop for FLWs on Stillbirth Reduction strategies in Haveri

an Optimized Model of Comprehensive Intervention Package and Delivery Strategies to Reduce Stillbirth in India" project. This participatory approach aimed to foster understanding, open dialogue, and explore potential solutions for reducing stillbirths. The workshop gathered program managers, healthcare providers, and frontline health workers, with key insights provided by District Health Officer Dr Rajesh Surgihalli and Reproductive Child Health Officer, Dr M Jayanand. They addressed the unique challenges of Haveri district, shedding light on the current healthcare landscape and identifying barriers and facilitators to improving maternal and child health outcomes.

The draft report from the workshop has been completed and revised based on feedback received. Following the workshop, in-depth

interviews were conducted with healthcare staff to gain more detailed insights. The data collection, which began in August, was led by nurse mentors and the central team.



■ Suggestions by participants to address challenges to improve maternal and child health outcomes in Haveri

Community Engagement

Awareness campaign in Mumbai local trains for World Breastfeeding Week

To celebrate, World Breastfeeding Week, KHPT's partner organization in the KMC project in Mumbai, Foundation for Mother and Child Health (FMCH), organized an awareness campaign on 7th and 8th August 2024 in local trains connecting to Ulhasnagar. Local trains

are the lifeline of Mumbai, serving millions of commuters daily, including numerous mothers and their infants. The campaign aimed to raise awareness about women's autonomy and their right to breastfeed anytime, anywhere, promoting the normalization of breastfeeding in public spaces.



■ Campaign to raise awareness on normalization of breastfeeding in public space

KHPT Launches “Kandamma Nagalli” Campaign to Promote Early Childhood Care and Gender Equality



■ “Kandamma Nagalli” campaign to promote ECC and Gender Equality

KHPT has launched the “Kandamma Nagalli” campaign - meaning “Let the Baby Smile” - as part of Early Childhood Care and Development program in Tumakuru District. This initiative, in collaboration with Women and Child Protection Vigilance Committees (Kavalu Samitis) and Gram Panchayats, aims to advocate for the health and rights of women and children in rural areas. Through perspective-building sessions, committee members are empowered to understand their roles and challenges, and develop actionable plans to support women and children.

The campaign’s messages come to life through vibrant jathas, featuring audio jingles, posters, and diverse participants, from school teachers to police officers. Male participation is actively encouraged, helping husbands among eligible couples understand factors determining the sex of the child. Kandamma Nagalli seeks to transform attitudes and practices in the community to ensure that every mother feels supported, every baby is welcomed without bias, and to build an environment of love, respect, and equality.

Case story



A Mother’s Determination: How Kangaroo Mother Care Helped Baby To Thrive

On June 6, 2024, our Peer Educator visited Payal’s home to find her baby weak and low birth weight (LBW), weighing just **1270** grams. Overwhelmed with worry, Payal and her family feared for the baby’s survival. Our Peer Educator consulted with the ASHA worker and arranged for the baby’s readmission to the hospital that evening. She explained Payal the importance of consistent Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) and breastfeeding for weight gain of the baby.

Desperate to save her baby, Payal immediately started KMC. By June 11, the baby was of **1370** grams of weight and was discharged from the hospital. On June 21, during a visit with ASHA, Payal said that now she is less stressed as her baby has gained weight and became 1600 grams.

Despite challenges during a family wedding, Payal was committed to continue and increase hours to provide KMC to the baby. On June 28, the baby weighed **1800** grams, and by July 4, the weight had reached **2000** grams - an impressive gain of **800** grams in a month. Payal expressed her gratitude stating, “Madam, because of your support, my baby is healthy today. Without your guidance, it wouldn’t have been possible for me to manage my baby’s health in a wedding home filled with guests.”

Payal’s journey highlights the power of determination and effective healthcare practices like KMC and breastfeeding, demonstrating how informed care can transform challenging situations.

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