

104 and 108 Services- A Boom to Rural Health in Andhra Pradesh



Management

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ABSTRACT

"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" ----- WHO, 1948 This paper highlights the importance of 104 and 108 services for the prosperity of the rural health and touches some hurdles and also suggests measures to strengthen those services in rural areas. "Health is Wealth". The prosperity of the rural health leads to rural development. From the beginning rural areas are suffering from health problems like different types of fevers, diarrhea, anemia due to lack of proper sanitation, mal nutrition food, lack of awareness about diseases etc. Though, number of epidemic diseases are controlled, new diseases are raising on account of different factors. For proper maintenance of good health, especially in rural areas, bringing awareness among the masses is more important. Health Management Research Institute (HMRI) in association with government of Andhra Pradesh and Mahindra Sathyam Foundation is contributing to awake the people regarding health problems. The vision of HMRI is to improve health delivery services in Andhra Pradesh through technology and better management practices and transform health delivery services by creating an easily accessible virtual platform. The services of HMRI comprise a tool-free health information contact centre-104-which is available 24x7 and assist callers with medical advice, information, counseling and service improvement. The other health care services like tele- medicine, tele- monitoring and hospital managements are also offered from HMRI. Emergency Management and Research Institute (EMRI) is also handling medical, police and fire emergencies through the 108 emergency service. It is a free service for any emergencies involving people. The service is available 24x7 in the entire states of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Uttarakhand. The performance of 104 and 108 services in improving health of the people is satisfactory. But further those services have to be strengthened in rural areas to improve the health status of the people by removing the hurdles to them. Then the prosperity of rural health is possible.

Introduction:-

Health is largely the responsibility of state, but the union government finances national public health programs that are characterized as public goods. After getting independence India achieved significant progress in improving health standards in our country. The rural health services infrastructure in each state is wide spread, starting with community workers, sub-centers, primary health centers, community health centers, secondary level district hospitals up to medical colleges and their tertiary facilities. In Andhra Pradesh the existence health system is complex and has multiple entities coordinating with one another on issues related to health service delivery. The private health sector is also playing a crucial role in improving health status in A.P. It accounts for over 72 % of inpatients admissions and over 85% of outpatient contacts.

Objectives:-

EMRI Emergency Management and research Institute handles medical, social, fire awareness through 108 emergencies. The objectives of 108 are as follows.

- 1) To save life
- 2) To report a crime in progress
- 3) To report a fire

Example: Medical emergencies like serious injure, stroke, respiratory, diabetes, animal bill etc.

Police agencies like robbery, theft, street fights, suicides, missing, kidnap etc.

Fire emergencies like burns, fire breakout, and industrial fire hazard etc.

Health management research institute is to improve health with 104 services.

- 1) Medical advices and information
- 2) Counseling
- 3) Service improvement

By doing the above things 104 services bring awareness among people to improve health standards.

108 Services in other states: Government of Gujarat is committed to provide Emergency Response Service through toll free number 108 for Medical, Police and Fire emergencies. In order

to ensure efficient delivery of service to the people of Gujarat, GVK Emergency Management and Research Institute has been appointed as nodal agency under PPP (Public Private Partnership) model to professionally manage and deliver comprehensive, speedy, reliable and quality emergency service in Gujarat. The launch of 108 Services in Gujarat on 29th August 2007 has heralded a new era of emergency medical care in the state. The service has revolutionized the response to the people in distress and ensured access and affordability for the benefit of people of Gujarat. GVK EMRI operates 108 services in 11 states including Gujarat. With ongoing addition of ambulances, there would shortly be 506 ambulances under 108 service in Gujarat to provide Emergency Response to the entire population of 6.05 crores, covering all the districts. Since launch 108 has attended more than 22 lakh emergencies and saved more than 1 lakh lives in life threatening situation. 20,265 deliveries have been assisted by EMTs of 108 ambulances or at Scene. It currently responds to between 2000-2200 emergencies on daily basis.

In 2012, more than 2.34 lakh pregnant women used 108 ambulance services pushing up institutional deliveries in the state. Figures released by the Ziqitza Health Care Ltd (ZHCL), which is operating the service on contractual basis, showed that out of the 4.57 lakh cases they attended, there were 2.34 lakh pregnant women, who were transported from their homes to hospitals. Also, the ambulance provided them transport services from hospitals to their homes. The medical health and family welfare department officials claimed that recently a survey was conducted by Indian Institute of Health Management and Research (IIHMR) in association with UNICEF, which showed that the institutional deliveries increased to 81%. In 2011, the institutional deliveries were below 70%. Since the government is taking various measures to reduce maternal mortality ratio and infant mortality rate, the ambulance services encouraged relatives of pregnant women to take them to hospitals for child birth.

Role of 104 and 108 services:-

To improve health status in Andhra Pradesh especially in rural areas, both 104 and 108 services are contributing very well. EMRI is a pioneer and non profit professional organization in emergency management services in India. It is operated in public-private partnership (PPP) mode. It handles medical, police, fire emergencies through 108 emergency services. This is a free service delivered through state of art emergency call response centers and it has over 785 ambulances around Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Uttarakhand. After launching emergency

services on August 15 2005 in Hyderabad, EMRI provides an integrated emergency service across the state of AP. There was a decision taken by EMRI to provide emergency services in all 28000 villages in Andhra Pradesh. Government is also trying to purchase 310 ambulances under the programme Rural Child Health (RCH) in addition to existing 127 ambulances. 108 ambulance service gauged by the fact, that more than 80000 critically ill-patients among the 47 lakh emergency cases were shifted to hospital in time to save their lives. In Andhra Pradesh 802 working ambulances presently existed. 3 lakh programme people were suitable to respected hospitals through 108 ambulances. 108 emergency response service also signed MOU with over 6800 hospitals which provide initial stabilization free of cost for the first 24 hours.

Health management research institute (HMRI) in an association with govt. of AP and Mahindra Satyam foundation provides health on call for all citizens in a unique public-private partnership (PPP). The service of the HMRI comprise a tool free health information contact center 104 which is available 24x7 and assist caller with medical advice, information, counseling and service improvement. Through 104 citizens can have access to the details of hospitals in their area, medical colleges, dispensaries, diagnostic centers, pharmacies, rehabilitation centers and other health care services in AP. To seek counseling on HIU matrimonial discord, suicide tendencies, and chronic diseases like cancer etc. The govt. launched these 104 services, also to provide health care to rural people residing in the remote areas of the state reducing the mortality rate among pregnant women. Women and children in remote areas where medical facilities are not available were the main axis of the 104 mobile medical services to the door step in the rural areas. This service would provide medical assistance to this needy at their homes free of cost. These services are bringing awareness and encouraging people to improve their health status and encouraging donation of blood and also parts of body So standards of living of the people raised ultimately, country achieves economic prosperity. By April 25th, 2010 calls crossed 4 crores. Riverside habitations are also being provided these facilities by boats. HMRI has been certified as ISO 9001: 2008.

Under 104 services, in 2012 the state government has reportedly decided to restrict the 104 health services as part of cost-cutting measures. According to sources, in a meeting held between the 104 contract employees and the state government on Monday, it has been decided to withdraw services to 5,000 villages. Earlier the state government used to operate 475 services

for 28 days a month in about 25,000 villages. But now they have decided to restrict the services to 24 days per month by removing nearly 1,000 employees as per the recommendations by an expert committee constituted by the government.

Problems to 104 and 108 services:-

The employees of 104 and 108 services are facilitate the problems like insecurity of job, low wages, temporary employment, outsourcing competitions, irregular payments, suppression by the managements etc. besides this in the course of profession, the problem of fake calls is more recently the union of 104 services is protesting to get their justifiable demands. By solving the problems of 104 and 108 services, the efforts and services can be strengthened.

Measures to strengthen services:-

For further strengthen the activities of 104 and 108 services the following measures to be taken especially in rural areas.

- 1) Publicity and awareness among rural people about 104 and 108 services.
- 2) There should be strong action against fake callers who wastes time and services.
- 3) The problems and demands of 104 and 108 works must be solved. They are doing agitations at present for the last 3 weeks.
- 4) The role of NGOs and voluntary organizations is more in providing health services through 104 and 108 services. So they should be involved.
- 5) The panchayat raj institutions have to play key role in providing 104 and 108 services to that rural poor.
- 6) MOU with much more hospitals make the services strengthen.
- 7) There should be review and revision regarding services in proper time to correct defects.
- 8) Appointment of appropriate staff as per need should be done.

Conclusion: In the health sector 104 and 108 services are playing a crucial role in the improvement of health standards. But there is need to remove the hurdles to services by taking appropriate steps. Interlinking of the rural health to 104 and 108 services is bringing good results in improvement of rural health. To strengthen this services a constant fund allocation is more important. Besides this, the contribution of public and other NGOs and Voluntary Organizations is required to provide appropriate services to rural areas.

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