



Govt. of Kerala
Department of Health & Family Welfare



District EHCP Connect: A Novel initiative by State Health Agency, Kerala on District Coordination at Grassroot Level for Information Dissemination and Coordination for Managing Covid 19 related activities among Private Hospitals in the State of Kerala

Innovation Category : COVID-19 SERVICES

- ❖ LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE
 - Programme Management
 - For state and district coordination, creating dedicated teams

Submitted By: -

STATE HEALTH AGENCY KERALA

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Introduction

The response of Kerala state to COVID-19, led by the health department, was nested in larger social mobilization. Kerala has developed a strong government and private health system. Private Hospitals, actively involved in public health in Kerala, played an active role in controlling the epidemic and in cushioning the impact on the poor. Transparency in information and willingness of the government to take the Private Hospitals into confidence has contributed to enhancing trust in the government. These strengths stance Kerala in good stead in managing the second wave of COVID-19 infections.

State Health Agency Kerala (SHA Kerala)

State Government constituted a permanent State Health Agency (SHA) to carry out all activities regarding implementation of Karunya Arogya Suraksha Padhathi (KASP) in the state. State of Kerala decided to converge all the Government sponsored health care schemes namely RSBY (Central and State Government combined scheme, where the premium is shared in the ratio 60:40), Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme CHIS (Kerala government fully sponsored scheme i.e. full premium paid by the State), Senior Citizen Health Insurance Scheme-SCHIS (all the senior beneficiaries aged 60 years and above in the RSBY/CHIS families were provided additional coverage of Rs 30,000 per beneficiary) and Karunya Benevolent Fund-KBF (Trust model implemented through Lottery department) along with Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) and formulated Karunya Arogya Suraksha Padhathi (KASP)¹.

DISTRICT EHCP CONNECT"

District EHCP Connect" is one of the novel initiatives of State Health Agency to connect with Empaneled Health Care Providers (EHCPs) through District Project Co-ordinator's of State Health Agency, Kerala (SHA) for information sharing, mutual bonding, doubt clearance, identification of need of advance training, problem solving and successful implementation of the scheme throughout the state.

"District EHCP Connect" is an online discussion forum and the District Project Coordinators (DPCs) are available on every Wednesday at 3.00pm for Empaneled Hospitals. District EHCP Connects are scheduled for public hospitals on 1st and 3rd week and for private hospitals on 2nd and 4th week of every month.²

The platform is operationalized in a structured manner and based on the guidelines issued for conducting District EHCP Connect to all District Project Coordinators of State Health Agency, Kerala. All the recent scheme guidelines are made available to EHCPs through the forum and make sure adherence of EHCPs to the scheme guidelines.

Role of DISTRICT EHCP CONNECT" in Management of Covid-19 Management Activities

District Project coordinators of State Health Agency, Kerala established a strong rapport and network with representatives of Public and Private Hospitals through District EHCP Connect. These representatives are the grassroot level administrators who are implementing the various directions from Central Health Ministry and State Health Ministry regarding management of Covid-19 activities of their respective hospitals.

Private hospitals in Kerala are strong stakeholders in the health care system of Kerala. They have extended their support to government for managing the covid-19 prevention activities and vaccination drives. The major concern addressed by the government was in establishing a channel of communication with private hospital. It was assumed that the traditional way of communication may lead to delay in dissemination of information and obtaining response from various stakeholders.

In this scenario, State Health Agency, Kerala extended their support to the government and coordinated all the activities of private hospitals through empaneled private hospitals network established by the District Project Coordinators.

During the second wave, other private hospitals those who are not empaneled in the State Health Agency also joined as covid 19 only hospitals with various efforts from district administration and government. During second wave of Covid-19, the flow of information and directions were very huge and needed very quick response and upgradation of activities at the grass route level.

Simultaneously, Covid vaccination drive also happened and the guidelines needed to be communicated to the field level for proper implementation. Initially, the technical glitches and frequent changes in the guidelines made huge confusions in the field level. Due to the need of hour, government implemented covid-19 prevention activities, covid vaccination drives, private hospital paid vaccination programs and government reference to private hospitals. The coordination of these activities with private hospitals were a herculean task.

For all the private hospital activities related to covid 19 activities in the State of Keral are channelized through State Health Agency. District EHCP connect helps the District Project Coordinators to manage and coordinate the activities with the hospitals. The online platform serves as a two-way communication system.

Traditionally we have observed a one-way communication from implementing agencies which usually results in delay in implementation of programs. In District EHCP Connect participants are empowered with knowledge, reassurance with supporting documents from government and grievance disposal mechanism. All the communication and discussions in the District EHCP Connect are recorded and circulated to all empaneled private hospitals.

Conclusion

The District EHCP Connect by District Project Coordinators of State health Agency, Kerala made a significant impact on managing covid-19 activities at district level especially grassroots level.

Reference

1. <https://sha.kerala.gov.in/karunya-arogya-suraksha-padhathi/> retrieved on 2021 Oct 24.
2. <https://sha.kerala.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/District-EHCP-Connect-Order.pdf>

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STATE HEALTH
AGENCY, THIRUVANATHAPURAM, KERALA**

Present: Dr Rathan U Kelkar IAS

**Sub: Initiation of District Level Weekly EHCP Online Discussion Forum-
“District EHCP Connect”**

Order no. SHA/33/2021-MGR (OPN) dated 15/01/2021

“KARUNYA AROGYA SURAKSHA PADHATHI (KASP) is the health care scheme which aims at providing a health cover of Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization to over 42 Lakhs poor and vulnerable families that form the bottom 40% of the Kerala population”. . From 1st July 2020 onwards the scheme is being implemented directly by Government of Kerala under trust mode (through the newly constituted State Health Agency (SHA). A trust model implementation was established collaborating SHA, TPA, Empanelled Health Care Provider (EHCP) and beneficiaries.

At present 550 Hospitals are empanelled in AB PMJAY KASP in which 186 public hospitals, 5 GOI hospitals and 359 private hospitals are currently empanelled. SHA was able to empanel 144 new hospitals into the scheme after July 2020. SHA Kerala have 32% active hospitals than the national average. SHA was able to empanel 144 new hospitals into the scheme after July 2020.

In order to enhance the communication between District Project Coordinators and EHCPs, State Health Agency, Kerala is initiating an online discussion forum, “District EHCP Connect”. District Project Coordinators are instructed to be available on every Wednesday 3pm - 4pm for EHCPs in an online platform where Representatives of EHCPs can discuss concerned areas related to the project. “District EHCP Connect to be scheduled for public and private EHCPs on an alternative week and link should be shared in advance to all EHCPs. The report of the same has to be incorporated in the monthly report.

Executive Director
State Health Agency, Kerala

Copy to :

- 1) Joint Director Operation, State Health Agency, Kerala.
- 2) Manager-Policy & Field Operations, State Health Agency, Kerala.
- 3) All District Project Coordinators, State health Agency, Kerala.