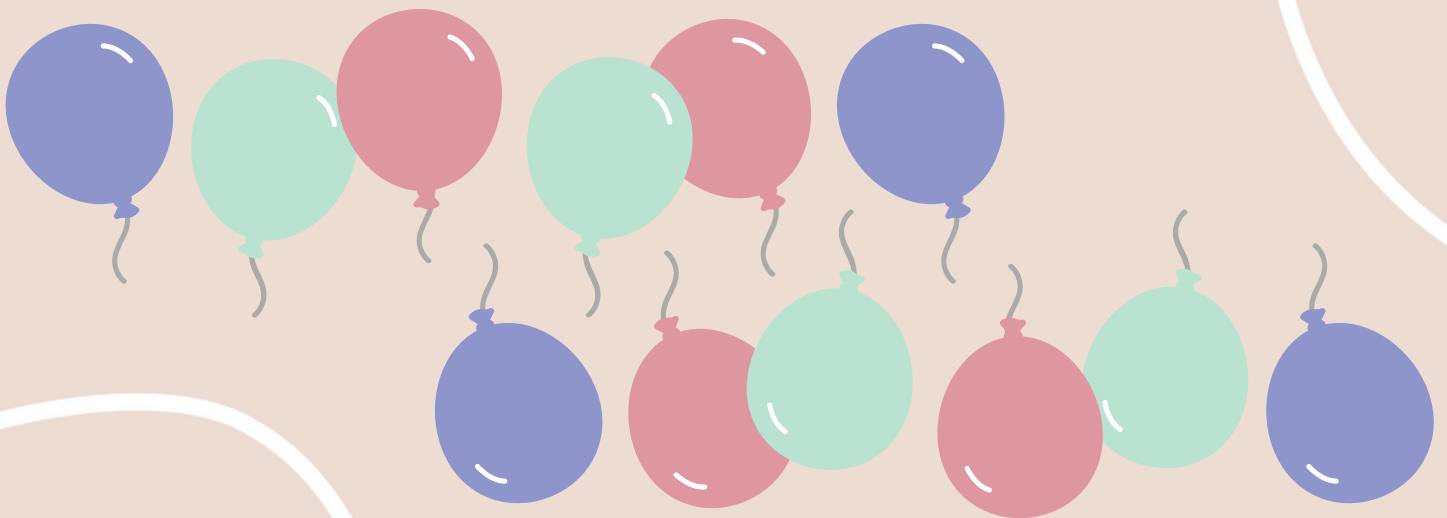


CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF

BASIC HEALTHCARE SERVICES



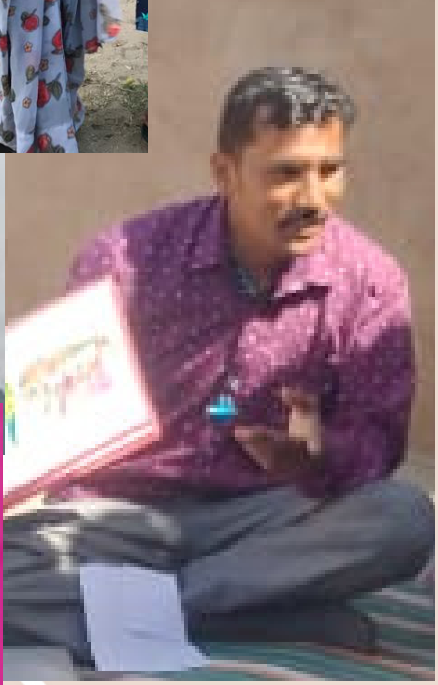
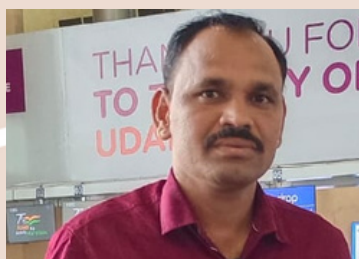
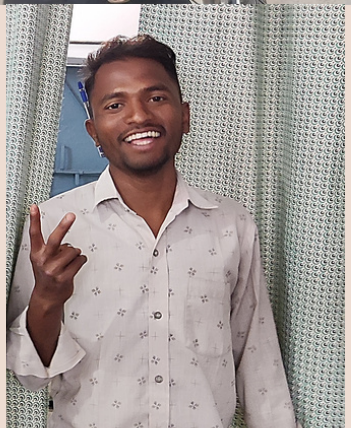
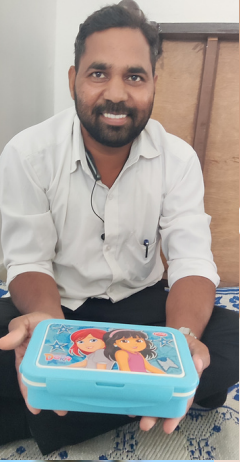
Basic
HealthCare
Services



WITH STORIES OF ...

April '23

BHS Newsletter Issue 11



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In the beginning of 2023, Basic Healthcare Services completed 10 years. The celebrations held at AMRIT Clinics and PHC Nithauwa drew our volunteers, patients, and influential people from the community. We heard many stories from women and men whose lives have been transformed, even saved by timely access to good quality primary healthcare.

This got us thinking: what are the stories our own team members carry, from primary healthcare, and from BHS? We put this out for them to answer.

JK Rowling has said “There’s always room for a story that can transport people to another place.” Read these stories, and be transported somewhere else!

Bheru, health worker, Ghated

Hitiya, 62, lives in village Kesariya, Pratapgarh district. Unwell for 3 years, he sought many kinds of treatment and was left with a heavy debt of Rs. 95k but saw no improvement in his condition. His spirits and strength dipped to an extent where getting out of bed was difficult too. Unable to perform any routine work, his family soon assumed he'd be unable to live too long.

When I visited his home, I saw he wasn't able to eat properly. He was eating sweet oats and his platter did not include oil, ghee, buttermilk, curd etc. I counselled him about the appropriate medicines and diet that he needed and told him to stay away from smoke.

On the second visit, he looked slightly better. He'd now begun eating twice a day. I encouraged him to increase meal intake to 4 times, starting with his first meal between 7 and 9 AM so that he could feel hungry again by noon. This time, I also taught him some exercises to reduce breathing difficulties.

After 9 whole months he looked evidently happy sitting with his family who looked equally cheerful. "If it weren't for Amrit, he wouldn't be sitting here now", they said.



Bheru, nutrition supervisor, Salumber

Laluram, 22 used to polish cement floors and lived with other labourers in a small room in Ahmedabad. Early to work and late to return, he'd survive the day on biscuits and tea. With this routine and diet, he often felt tired and in a few days fell sick with fever and cough. Treatment in Ahmedabad gave him no relief.

Eventually, he returned to his village where his parents took him to a faith healer. He made an offering of his goat and Rs. 20k and later spent Rs. 5k at a quack's clinic. All in vain. Then 6k more at a hospital in Sagwara which did make him feel better but he couldn't return due to lack of money now.

When I came across Laluram, I suspected him to have TB and told him about the good health services provided by Amrit Clinic at a low cost. He was diagnosed at the clinic after sputum microscopy and chest X-ray. We counselled him about TB, diet improvement, gave him medicines and poultry. We also did a family profile.

He would feed the hens and if he could, he worked in a vegetable garden.

After a full 6 months course of medication, eating eggs and green vegetables, he recovered completely. Now when I see him, it's hard to believe that he once had TB. His family is grateful to Amrit's team.

Bharmaram, health worker, Rawach

Prior to working with BHS, I would visit people affected by Silicosis and link them with different social security schemes. I could however do little to connect them to health services.

I learnt of the money people spent on seeking treatment, of visiting different places in Gujarat where the cost of medicines for a single month would be upto Rs. 8k. For someone who earns Rs. 200/ 300 per day, has to run his home and also save money for his treatment - these costs seemed impossible. And what if the earning member himself was sick? These families would mortgage their home, land or their jewelry for treatment and women were pushed into daily wage work to run their home and save money for their husbands' treatment.

After joining BHS I got a chance to work directly with health services. I saw how our clinics reached the poorest strata of people in our villages (and also our country) and provided health services at low-cost. AMRIT Clinic Rawach provides the same treatment that costs people thousands of rupees elsewhere, at a cost of just Rs. 100/ 200. So much relief this care has given to the families!

I feel uplifted thinking of the reduced burden for all these families. And draw deep breaths of satisfaction seeing our patients breathe easier.



After I learnt Medicine I started looking for ways to practice in sync with my idea of medicine. But I was unable to, for a long time.

It was in BHS that my practice and journey finally began. I learnt here, how a person is seen in the right way. Where there is space to talk, to be yourself, to learn, to understand people. To listen to their stories, relate to them, learn from them, see their courage. But this was also a difficult time because we were working for communities that were deprived in so many ways. I took a break... then came back. Because a connection was set up with the people whom we work for, with the people through whom we work for. Also I wanted to live in a place closer to nature.

I am now better able to connect with people in a way that I do not drown myself in the emotions, am able to help more and think more. That said, there is still a room for improvement!



Geeta, health worker, Ghated



A TB patient's narrative:
I am Bherulal from Bori village. I had been coughing for a while so I visited a quack and also a faith healer. But I felt no relief. My mother had recently died from the same illness and there was no one to take care of me. Sometimes my uncle took me for treatment, but I was losing hope for survival. Around this time, we heard of Geeta who lived in our village and worked at Amrit Clinic, Manpur.

Geeta's narrative:
I explained about our clinic to Bheru's Uncle, and he then brought him over. His checkup and tests confirmed that Bherulal was suffering from Tuberculosis. We started his treatment, I also visited him at home and counselled him about nutrition and about not stopping his treatment in between. 6 months later, Bherulal had recovered and was agile.

He says, "I am so happy now. There was someone in my village who learnt about my illness and took to the right place at the right time".

"This TB, is not a simple illness. Let us take a vow to remove it from its roots", says Geeta.

Goutam, health worker, Bedawal

A village near Bedawal has a high number of malnourished children the main reason for which is that their parents have to go faraway to work at mines. They cannot pay good attention to their children's diet.

Amrit clinic's team, Swasthya Kirans and members of the community came together to open a phulwari where 30-40 children started coming.

We saw them gaining weight with good nutrition. People also came to know of other health services provided at Amrit clinics. After the Phulwari work began, we have seen that parents now pay more attention to their children's diet and education.



On the night of Holi at 10 pm, a 35-year-old man came to our PHC with severe chest pain. His blood pressure was very high and his ECG showed signs of a heart attack.

We immediately started his treatment but it was clear that he needed to be sent urgently to another centre. As soon as we asked for a referral, the patient got up and ran away. It was Holi time, all men who came with him were drunk. We were in a fix!

Just then, another patient called Tulsiram who is well known to the PHC staff mentioned that this patient lived next door to him. Tulsiram has seen our team handle many emergencies and fully trusts the PHC.

We immediately called the other patient and within 5-10 minutes, he arrived. Tulsiram's words convinced the patient, who soon thereafter left for Dungarpur Medical College. He was admitted in the ICU for several days and later underwent Angiography in Ahmedabad. He is much better now!

Our PHC has experienced doctor and staff, also an ECG machine which helps us give the right advice to patients at the right time. When a local person joins us in our care, the benefit multiplies: All efforts come together and save our patients' lives.

Lali, health worker, Manpur

What is God?
My organization rates close to God for me. Where your words of happiness and pain are heard, and where full responsibility is taken for your treatment.

Before I began working I was confined to my home, scared to speak before others, not taking care of myself. I am aware of my rights now and slowly my fear has gone away. I can now talk to others with confidence, have also gained so much knowledge about diseases and nutrition.

In my difficult times the BHS team sensed my needs and went out of their way to help me. How else could I have risen from my situation? My eternal gratitude to all who helped make this possible.



Malaram, community health coordinator, Salumber

Bhimraj is a resident of Ghated. When Amrit clinic opened there, he was a Ward Panch and he helped us get the building from the Gram Panchayat.

After a few days, he suddenly fell ill and sought expensive treatment in Ahmedabad and Udaipur's government and private hospitals. But there was barely any improvement in his health.

One day when the health workers held the clinic's advisory committee meeting, he became aware of the health services provided here better.

When he visited the clinic, the team examined him and asked him to come again on doctor's day. When he did, we found out that he had a high Blood Pressure. He was treated and has become closer to the clinic ever since. He is taking timely medicines and is healthier now.

In his own words- When I was sick, I wandered to so many hospitals but finally got good treatment only here. My understanding of diet and disease prevention also improved. I like the way patients are taken care of, here. Especially, home visits.

Today, Bhimraj ji works for raising awareness in the communities and praises Amrit clinic. He tries to bring more patients to us and takes care of them himself. He is also a member of our advisory committee and gives useful suggestions time to time.



Mamta, nurse, PHC Nitthauwa

One night a woman with labour pain came to our PHC. Her blood pressure was dangerously high (250/120). I immediately talked to our doctor, started treatment to lower her BP, and counseled her relatives for a referral to another centre. All throughout, her husband did not speak a word and shortly thereafter, left the PHC. The woman and her relative kept waiting for him but he did not return.

I then prepared myself to conduct the delivery and gave her injections to lower her BP. She delivered a low-birth-weight baby, weighing only 1600 g. We reassured the mother about her baby, taught her the procedure for Kangaroo Mother Care. After she was discharged, our ANM made home visits to check her BP.

This was a difficult delivery and the family was not supportive. However, I got a chance to use my experience and the trainings I had received. I felt confident of the ability to manage such a situation. This made me immensely happy and satisfied.



Manju, health worker, Bedawal

The journey of a village woman.

I remember my first meeting as a Swasthya Kiran (community volunteer): I was so nervous, thinking what will they ask me, how will I respond? Slowly I started picking up my work. I liked the many trainings I got - in health, domestic violence, about the government schemes. I have linked up so many people to proper healthcare as well as to access the government benefits.

My family is so happy with my work, as prior to working I could not pay attention to hygiene and cleanliness and fell ill repeatedly. I also followed many superstitions in what I ate. But with work my condition has been steadily improving.

The support from my team helped me resume my studies that I had discontinued back in 2007. In 2020, I was able to complete my 10th grade! I am now in 12th grade and dream to study more and take up newer responsibilities. But for BHS, I would still be living with fear and illnesses, like so many other village women.



Mannalal, health worker, Rawach

Virma lives in Rawach, almost 100 kms from Udaipur. These are his words:

It was the rainy season. I began to feel feverish, and my body ached. Lightning and thunder filled the sky, so also there seemed to be sensations going through my body. I was so scared and nervous! One morning Kogi Bai (a Swasthya Kiran) came home and asked me - What happened to you? I told her everything: in last 3 months I had visited a Bhopa (traditional healer), a local doctor (quack), also sacrificed an animal. I spent 15,000 rupees but all in vain. She then asked me to visit AMRIT Clinic, and spoke of many patients who were treated there and are now doing fine. I visited the clinic, and my treatment began which I took these for 6 months. At such little cost I am cured of my disease, I don't have words to express the gratitude I feel!

How do you decide the value of good health, Health is priceless. Money floats in and out and you can still get it. But a healthy body is a hard catch

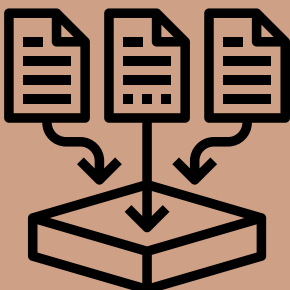


Ramchandra, data operator, Manpur

I work as a data entry operator in Amrit Clinic. Initially, the entry of the many medicines and illnesses seemed very difficult, but gradually I settled down. The team was very supportive and helped me a lot.

My work here has taught me so many skills, related to data, diseases, medicines, dealing with patients, etc. This space has also made me learn so many life lessons: How to work according to a fixed plan, what does living together as a family feel like, and not to forget taking care of my own health. I also see how so many patients' trajectories have changed: some of them seem to have got a new life because of the services and warmth provided here.

I hope to continue my work and keep providing good service to the community. And may the services yield even better results!



Ramesh, executive community health, Aspur

Community participation

In Anjana Phala (a remote village in Richa PHC), Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committee (VHSNC) meetings happened very infrequently. But when BHS got involved, community participation started increasing. Discussions began on what are the needs of our village?

Here are the issues that came up - not having clean drinking water, malnutrition among women, and children not getting quality food.

The RO plant in the village was not working. The charged up committee members called up the toll-free number, and the RO was fixed within a week. The Anganwadi (AWC) building was rundown and had become a dumping ground for the village. The question came up, who is responsible for the AWC, and for ensuring there is clean place for the children to sit and read?

And the members said, it is our collective responsibility. All of them came together to get it fixed, contributing in funds and also physical labour. The AWC is completely changed now: a shining example of how VHSNC and the community came together to change the whole picture and make the picture whole.

Ramlal, health worker, Manpur

Kalpana was born without lips.

Her grandfather said that a child growing up like this would be a blot in the family's name, and asked her mother to feed her less milk so that she gradually dies.

When I learnt this, I was heartbroken. I knew this could be corrected, worked hard at building my trust with her mother.

After a lot of efforts she agreed for the surgery.

I went with the mother and baby to Jaipur. The surgery was successful: Kalpana's smile was like that of any other child, it was so beautiful! Her entire family was extremely happy. Kalpana now studies in Grade 2 and calls me Bade Papa.

P.S. It was me who named her Kalpana.

"Grandma, if you did not exist, your son wouldn't exist. If your son was not here, my mother would not be here. So I would not have been born in this house. Think of this my dear grandmother!"

From Kalpana, to Dadi through Ramlal. With love.



Ranjan, lab technician, PHC Nitthauwa

An 18-year-old girl came to our PHC one day. She had taken treatment for Tuberculosis from a private hospital but even after 2 months there was no benefit. Sputum test done at our PHC again confirmed the diagnosis of Tuberculosis. She now needed to be checked for drug resistance: We explained to her for going to the hospital in Sagwara (55 kms away) for the test.

Her family was very poor and she had lost both her parents. Her neighbor supported her and accompanying her to Sagwara. She was found to be having Drug resistant TB and needed to visit the Treatment centre for getting her medicines started.

The right guidance at the PHC helped her start treatment without wasting time and money. If people get such care, they will be spared running here and there and will start the right treatment without wasting time.

Ravi, nurse, PHC Nitthauwa

One Sunday afternoon I was on duty at the PHC.

At 3:30 pm, a man came with excessive sweating and chest pain. His BP, pulse and sugar levels were normal. We took his ECG, which showed changes suggestive of a blockage in his heart. I talked to the patient for a referral to Udaipur but he refused. We called the family and explained the gravity of the situation, yet they were not able to make up their mind. Time was running out fast, I then called the Up-sarpanch of the village. He came to the PHC, spoke to the family who were now convinced to go to the tertiary care hospital in Udaipur. There the patient was found to have blockages in his heart and underwent Angioplasty. He is much better now.

This case highlighted the strength that comes to primary healthcare services, when different people come together.

Sawagi bai, swasthya kiran, Morwal

I have learnt so much after being connected to AMRIT Clinics. I visit my people in their homes, explain about the illnesses. I visit them 4-5 times (every month), check on their medicines, the food they are eating. I see them getting better. My work has brought me so much respect from my people, given so much love. There are so many people I have connected with AMRIT. Of TB alone, I have connected 100-150 people - from my village, my relatives living in different villages, many living so far away. Many of them went to Eder (in Gujarat), to Udaipur, got lost there and then came here. If AMRIT was not there, how would these people have gotten better? Many of them would not have survived. And how would I have got this work, and so much knowledge!

Shankar, health worker, Rawach

The scene: Dhabakhet hamlet, Kadech village.

A meeting was being held here, the Sarpanch, ward panch, and other local leaders were all there. I wondered, what was the matter, drawing so many community members together? Soon enough I was part of the discussions too! We want you to open a Phulwari here, children there are doing so well. We have so much affection and trust in Amrit Clinic's Phulwaris! When we see children in other villages go to schools and Anganwadis we feel sad, as our children have no such options.

We request Amrit Clinic to open a Phulwari, and commit to our full cooperation.

From that time, the Sarpanch has also got a road constructed linking this village to the next one. Now that a road is paved, we need to walk down this path, and do our bit to nurture the bright minds!

Sigri bai, clinic attendant, Rawach

When I think of Rawach (AMRIT Clinic), there are so many facilities here. Everything is so precious.

I make sure to keep it very clean. When I go on leave, I worry that my hospital will be dirty. It is as if my heart is here in my hospital, even more than in my home.

Few days back there was a holiday. Only the nurses were here at the clinic, rest all were on leave. Even then, I got up at 6 and started my work. By 8 I was free, and then went home. When I am not well, then too I get up and slowly try to do my work. Lying down and taking rest is not what I want to do.

If someone else is working, I feel like checking up on how she has done her work.

What can I say? Just that I am in love with my hospital!



Sohan, health worker, Ghated

Dhuli bai is swasthya kiran in our Ghated's Amrit Clinic. She has a son named Rishi who greets me with Namastey whenever I go to their home.

One day, Dhuli bai called me and asked me to bring some seeds. I got them from the clinic and when I went to her home, there were 5-5 people sitting there already. At the very moment the kid came out and said Namastey like he always does. Dhuli Bai asked me, "did you bring the seeds?" I said "yes, of 7 kinds."

And then I showed them the seeds of tomato, tensi, lady finger, turmeric etc. Rishi saw them and he started mimicking me. He picked the packets one by one but took all the names wrongly! tomatoes became sitafal and sitafal became brinjal. Oranges became coriander and jaiphal became tensi!

Everyone burst out with laughter seeing this.

I asked him what standard he is studying now. To which he said, "I am in 4th standard but I sit in 8th standard." And we all laughed again. I see a kid's innocence in this story which I believe should be preserved.

Sumitra, health worker, Kojawara

I was visiting a TB patient in a very far-off village.

He was not at home but the man next door came over and told me that his wife was very sick, and I went over with him immediately. She lay on the bed, too weak to even sit up. She had taken treatment from a private hospital, and a traditional healer, and a quack.

“Please come to Kojawara clinic, we will do a full check-up and give medicines with utmost care”, I asked of them.

At the clinic, she was diagnosed with Jaundice and Typhoid. She is now well. Whenever I go to her village, she says if you had not come, I would have died.

This was a miracle, no?

Sunder, health worker, Morwal

One fine morning, I got a call from Surajgarh (the last village near AMRIT Clinic Morwal, set in the middle of the Aravali hills). The woman’s daughter was having labour pains from the night before.

“She is in severe pain, this is her first delivery. Please arrange for her to come there (the clinic)”, she spoke urgently.

I called our Ambulance driver: he said he had some other work, but will try to come. I then dialed the Government ambulance, they agreed to come here.

But meanwhile, our Ambulance arrived.

We immediately went to Surajgarh and rushed the woman to our clinic.

And now, I got a call from the government ambulance saying they were nearing our destination too. When I told them about our ambulance being there already, they got angry - “Why did you call us then, we will file a complaint against you!”

“The other ambulance came here, what could I do?” I told them. I was now very nervous.

I gave all details to the Ambulance team, when they said “Okay” I heaved a sigh of relief.

In half hour the woman delivered a healthy baby. If we had not brought her here, she would have delivered at home. The family were so happy!



Suresh, data operator, Rawach

Diversity does not make us into opponents, it enriches us!

Diversity indicates variations in things. All of us here in BHS are different from each other: we come from different parts of the country like Mumbai, Delhi, Kerala, or even different places within Rajasthan! Like Mewar, or Marwar. Our lifestyles, foods, and language are so different, and also our customs and cultures.

Our geography and history may be the reason for these variations. And because of these, many times there are differences in our thoughts too. When we are working together in a group, everyone expresses different views. From these different ideas we select those that are best suited to meet the objectives of our organization.

We accept these ideas in our work or for reaching our goals. Even at a personal level, we get a chance to know, understand, and accept each other’s thoughts.

In addition to the ideas, we get a chance to know different cultures, rituals, food, and festivals. Based on our liking and ease, we integrate these in our daily lives and get much joy and comfort!



The stories speak volumes. That Primary healthcare saves lives, also transforms those of its' healthcare workforce – as if a raw Diamond is polished and shines Bright.

Our gratitude to all the BHS team, past and present, for helping make the dream, and the work possible

OUR PUBLICATIONS

- **Women's Day Stories**

6 colleagues share their journeys on Women's Day. Through these we celebrate our women changemakers.

- **WomenLift Health Leadership Journey**

Dr Sanjana shares her leadership journey of transforming the motivation and confidence of our women nurses

- **Difficulty in walking: Childhood manifestations of a micronutrient deficiency**

• Rajasthan's Right To Health in **RTH the wire** and **RTH patrika**

Jan 23 to Mar 2023

Indicator	Amrit Clinic	PHC	Total
Patient visits	10134	9602	19736
Pregnant women provided care	366	125	491
Number of deliveries	40	112	152
No of children provided Immunization	0	128	128
Number of women provided injectible contraceptives	54	43	97
Number of children with severe acute malnutrition treated	82	40	122
Number of patients with Tuberculosis treated	194	9	203
Diabetes Mellitus	241	239	480
Hypertension	185	129	314
Number of children reached through Growth monitoring	1520	223	1743
No. Of children provided care through Phulwaris	305	0	305

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