

The best practices in PMTCT Program facilitated stabilization of epidemic in Tamil Nadu, India

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The National program of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV in India was started in 2001 in the State of Tamilnadu. The prevalence of HIV among the pregnant mothers was 1.5% in the year 2001 in Tamilnadu. The program was started initially among the 10 Medical Colleges and 5 District Hospitals. Further it was expanded to 730 centers which includes majority of Govt. Hospitals, 20% of private and corporate hospitals. The program was an eye opener to understand the gravity of the problem in general population and helped us to develop strategies for intervention. Almost 75% of the ante natal mothers were screened for HIV with counseling and informed consent every year and couple counseling was encouraged in all the health care settings. The young woman in the age group of 18 to 25 years was more found positive and it was declared that marriage is the risk factor for Indian Women. PMTCT program as the entry point helps to trace other positive members in the community. Almost all the Anti natal mothers have the first information about primary prevention in the state. The Counselors who accompanied the positive mothers to the labour wards reduced the stigma and discrimination among Obstetricians who were initially reluctant and fearful. Participation of large number of Non Governmental Organizations, private sector hospitals, interventions of Target groups, youth outside and inside schools and colleges, women self help groups, early registry of all positives for monthly follow up, timely treatment of OIs, nutritional supplements to the needy, Well baby clinics, husband friendly ANC and labour wards, positive mothers network, Doctors Forum for the PLHIVs, promotion of usage of condoms, treatment of STI, Safe blood transfusions, avoidance of unnecessary injections and procedures, systematic and sustainable intervention among the bridge population, HIV testing and care envisaged in the ANC protocol, strengthening ANC and other hospital services through HIV program, involvement of all the HCPs, above all mainstreaming HIV with line depts. brought down the epidemic from 1.5% to 0.25% and stabilized the epidemic in Tamilnadu State.

Biography

P. Kuganatham is serving as City Health Officer, Chennai. He is the recipient of "Life Time Achievement Award" from the Dr Mgr Medical University. He served as Director, Communicable Diseases Hospital, Chennai, Project Director, Public Health Foundation of India, Cdc Consultant, Tn, Program Officer, Pptct & Consultant Unicef, Chennai, Associate Professor, Infectious Diseases for the medical colleges under university of Madras, Team Leader, Gujarat Earth Quake Medical Relief Team Member, Steering Committee, Aids Cell, Tamil Nadu. He identified the new strain of *Vibrio Cholera* I.E., *Vibrio Cholera* Non 01, 0139 for the first time and named it as "Madras Strain".

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