

**The ASHWINI Team wishes You  
a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year**

Newsletter 2007

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**Looking Back.....**

*The 20 years of sustained work in the villages is paying off. The level of health awareness has increased remarkably. Large numbers of patients are attending the hospital and area centres; three quarters of the pregnant women delivered in the hospital this year. Mothers are bringing their children for growth monitoring.*

**The Past Year.....**

has been busy with numerous activities going in full swing.

The **Chicken Bank** programme, under the Good Gifts of **Charities Advisory Trust**, UK has contributed greatly to the better health and income of the community through eggs and sale of chickens. The "**Heart Fund**", also from CAT, has supported the surgeries of 13 children with congenital cardiac disease (Kirbomman here is one such kid) at **Narayana Hridayalay** in Bangalore. Special thanks to Dr. Colin John and his team for their fantastic work.



The **Safe Motherhood Programme** has helped us to improve the care of pregnant mothers and newborns by enabling us to organise special antenatal camps, provide them with nutritional supplements and warm clothes for the newborns.

As we had reported in our last newsletter, the **New Building for Hospital** has become inadequate for the increasing health care needs of the community. A new building for the Gudalur Adivasi Hospital has been designed by Mr. Subhas Basu & Dr. Yogananda. The foundation was laid in October this year and the walls are going up fast. Stabilised soil cement blocks are being made at the site, giving employment for 12 families.



The construction was started with full faith in your continued support. List of donors to our building fund and the progress of work will be constantly updated in our website at [www.ashwini.org/building.php](http://www.ashwini.org/building.php)

**Your valuable donations are making our dream a reality.**



The **Tamil Nadu (TN) Government** has come forward to partner us in many significant ways. A **Mobile van** sponsored by the TN Health Systems Development Project goes out into the villages daily helping us better serve mothers, children and patients with chronic illnesses.

TN Government is also supporting the **HIV Awareness** Programme. GAH has been recognized as a Voluntary Counseling and Testing Centre.

The Government will be supporting the **Sickle Cell Centre** at GAH and also reimbursing the cost of inpatient care for tribals as of mid-November. The centre is doing well, the painful crises of patients on treatment are fewer and hospital admissions have reduced.

We continue to be a Govt recognised **Tuberculosis** Diagnosis and Treatment centre. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, (World AIDS Day), Government of Taminadu presented us an award recognising our work in controlling TB and HIV / AIDS.

Gandhi Jayanthi was celebrated on October 2<sup>nd</sup> in the school grounds with a **Health Mela**.

There was fun and frolic as well as a lot of learning. The students, their parents, health volunteers, health staff and medical elective students participated. A special rice dish with greens cooked by the volunteers was thoroughly enjoyed by all !

The **Community Mental Health Programme** is running well with the support of Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai. This programme has had a tremendous impact on the lives of many people in a short time. Families that have suffered with a severely ill relative for many years can now relax and go to work. Thanks to Dr Kishore of NIMHANS and other psychiatrist friends for their support.



The **Village health volunteer training programme** is going well. The spirit of voluntarism is high and makes the work much more meaningful.

The **Medical Student Elective programme** has been a huge success. Michael Partridge from Edinburgh writes,



*"I could not have had a better elective than at GAH. To have seen what goes on at ASHWINI and ACCORD and to see such goodness and kindness in the people who run it has given me a perspective on life I would never have otherwise, and will never forget".*

The **Staff** are becoming more confident each year and taking on more responsibilities. Due to the expansion of the work, we took five **New Nurse Trainees** from the adivasi community. Six of the earlier trainees completed training and have joined as staff. Dr. PG Premila, Paediatrician, helps out with the medical electives. Dr Clement, a junior doctor joined us in May. Dr.Mridula who had been away, rejoined us in August. We had Dr Neelesh Jain, a Canadian surgeon, Dr Ramesh Karra, GP from the US, Dr Sherub from CMC Vellore volunteering with us. Julie, Ramesh's wife, helped us with an analysis of the Insurance programme. Many other friends helped us out in many ways. Special mention is due for Dr.Roberts, Dr.Ramesh, Drs. Rekha & Kurien and Drs. Rukmani & Janardhan.

The **Hospital** is busier than ever. As of November of this year, we treated **16190 outpatients** (60% tribals), admitted **1268 inpatients** (90% tribals), conducted **243 deliveries** (88% tribals) and performed **202 surgeries** (60% tribal).

The **Dental Clinic** has been revived by two young dentists, Manju and Mahantu. The community dental programme is going in full swing. Thanks to **Toshniwal Trust** for making this possible.

The **Insurance Programme** is going well with the support of SRTT. Our insurance programme was awarded the Micro Insurance Award by PlaNet Finance India and ING as an excellent initiative. Our sister organisations in Education, Community Organisation, Tea Leaf Marketing continue to expand the scope of their work. Please visit [www.adivasi.net](http://www.adivasi.net) and [www.justchangeindia.com](http://www.justchangeindia.com) for details.

### **Looking Ahead....**

There is tremendous enthusiasm all around. The community is volunteering to take responsibility for its health. There are a lot of activities in the villages.

The focus during the next year will be on :

- ❖ Capacity building at the village level, Decentralisation for greater community participation and new responsibilities for the 8 area teams.
- ❖ Achieving sustainability for the health work.
- ❖ Establishing **Community Funds** to help people get into the habit of saving.
- ❖ Completing the construction of the new Hospital Building.

Donations in India are exempt from income tax under section 80G of the income tax act.

For tax deductible donations in the US, please route checks through Vidyalay.org Foundation Inc, 35 Mayer Drive, Clifton, NJ 07012 USA

Online donations can be made through GIVE Foundation : [www.giveindia.org](http://www.giveindia.org)

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