

# ASHWINI Newsletter 2014



## Season's Greetings and All the Best Wishes for a Wonderful Year ahead!

As another eventful year comes to a close, we would like to thank all the friends who have stood with the tribals of the Gudalur Valley; friends who have helped to make a very definite difference in the lives of over 20000 people from one of the most marginalized communities. It is heartening to see the changes in the health status, in the improved self esteem and confidence of the youngsters and the outstanding skills and capabilities of most of the staff who were originally school drop outs!

The Hospital and the Community program continue to function with a bit more improvement each year.

### *Training takes off...*



Infrastructure for the Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) course under the Indian Nursing Council has been completed as per Government requirements, thanks to the support of "Poristes Stiftung" from Switzerland. Classrooms, offices, labs and dormitories for accommodating 40 students are ready. The process of affiliation involves innumerable steps, each bogged down by bureaucracy. We are working on it and hope that in a year or two, we will be able to start training Our first batch of ANM nurses.

In the meantime, the BSS Nursing and Paramedical courses are going gung ho. The students staged a cultural program on December 5, Adivasi Day, to commemorate the first land rights rally in 1987. The Hospital came alive with so many youngsters, including students from the bridge school for drop out children run by Vidyodaya. It was a day of fun, games and dancing.

### *The Blood Bank is operational...*

Our Blood Bank has finally been approved; the process taking a year! This is a great relief indeed as the nearest transfusion facility was two hours away.

### *Opening of the Extension Centre for People with Multiple Disabilities...*

Gudalur valley has little to offer its citizens with disabilities. With the support of the NIEPMD (National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities), a Central Government body, in partnership with ASHWINI and the Rotary Club of Gudalur Valley, the Extension Centre for Tribals was inaugurated on December 6<sup>th</sup>. A Special Education teacher and a Physiotherapist have been appointed. We hope the Centre will play a major role in helping the differently abled to access care in the Nilgiri District.



### ***A Year for Volunteers ...***

With Drs Isabel and Robert, Gynecologists from Switzerland and Dr Kathryn, Family Physician from UK, volunteering for up to a year, new areas are being better developed. Ultrasonography and Cancer Screening for cervical and breast cancer have gained momentum and Non Communicable Diseases follow up is being streamlined. Jodi, also from UK, has been beautifying the place with landscaping, fruit trees and flower gardens. Drs Premila, Kalyani, Sabine, Saji, Binu Kurian, Ramesh, Mainek Deb, Roberts, Vinoo & Pramila Jacob, Lorenzo continue to volunteer here. Dr Shivananda, a vascular surgeon and his cardiologist wife, Vinu together with hematologists Drs Nataraj & Bhat have recently joined their ranks increasing our services.

### ***Higher studies...***

Three Paniya girls and a Mullakurumba boy have gained admission for BSc Pharmacy, BSc Physiotherapy, MA in Mental Health and Diploma in Computer Engineering - milestones indeed. They are supported by Poristes

The master plan for the Adivasi Community College has been drawn up and we hope to get it off the ground in the coming year.

### ***Visiting students...***

This year saw a wide range of students ranging from 2 BSc Nursing students from Meghalaya, doing a six month internship with us to students from TISS, St John's Medical College, CMC Vellore and many UK and US universities. They all seemed happy with their experience and we hope that they will see the immense possibilities for service in a rural area.

### ***Looking ahead...***

The process of handing over of the ASHWINI Health System to the Adivasi Community is well under way. It is reassuring to see the sincerity and confidence with which the team has come forward to take on the responsibility.

Providing financial sustainability is one aspect for which they will need continued support. Once again we thank you all for being a part of this journey.

***Donations in India*** are exempt from Tax under 80G and money can be transferred to our SBI account in Gudalur payable to ASHWINI, Ac no 11317309532, IFSC Code: SBIN 0001016.

***Donations from Overseas*** can be sent directly to our foreign account in SBI, Ac no 11317309429, SWIFT Code: SBININBB470

***In the USA, Tax deductible*** online donations can be made through Tribal India Health Foundation, <http://www.ashwini.org/donations.php> This site uses a "Paypal" account. Please send us an email if you do use this route.

Checks in the US can be sent to Ms. Asmita Shendye, Vidyalay.Org Foundation Inc., 35 Mayer Drive, Clifton, NJ 07012.

***In the UK***, we can get the benefit of "Gift Aid" if donations are made through the charity "From Here to There" Sort Code: 30-65-92, Account no: 16621468. Please send an email to [friendsofgudalur@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofgudalur@gmail.com)