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HARSHAM- “HAPPINESS REDEFINED” – WORK FORCE FOR BETTER ELDER CARE

INTRODUCTION:

In a bid to address the lack of availability of trained elderly care givers in Kerala, Kudumbashree mission started a new flagship program Harsham-“Happiness Redefined” Training agencies having very fine experience in geriatric care training and trained doctors will impart classes to selected Kudumbashree Women on taking care of bedridden patients and those with chronic illnesses as part of this program.

NEED:

Kerala’s total population as per the 2011 census is around 3.36 crore, of which 12.6 per cent are aged above 60 years. According to the present study, the state’s elderly population is growing at a perpetual rate of 2.3 per cent. The growth rate is high among the elderly aged 70 or 80 and above.

With a good track record of social development indicators, especially in health and education sectors, Kerala has undergone a demographic transition with a rise in the proportion of aged among the total population along with declining growth rate of the population. The rate at which the proportion of aged population grows is higher in India compared to western countries.

Due to the advancing stage of Kerala’s demographic transition, the proportion of aged population will continue to increase through the next couple of decades. However, there is a decline in caregivers for this elderly population. Factors which contributed to this decline are reduction in family size, higher work participation rate of women, national and international job seeking flows, out-flow migration.

Harsham Caregivers for eldercare is an innovative and a flagship programme of Kudumbashree which gives livelihood opportunities to many committed

Kudumbashree members. Elder persons will get a decent and respectful post retirement life with the support of care giver.

The family of the elders will also be able to focus more on their activities at the same time they can live stress free as there is some skilled and reliable persons at home to support the parents.

The availability of reliable and trained persons in elderly care is a matter of concern. Also, the needs of the elderly persons are not about medical care, but it varies considerably. Loneliness, support for payment of bills & banking transactions, support for daily chores & medical care are some of the issues they are facing. Kudumbashree Mission analyzes it as a social issue and addressing it will find employment to women in the network.

‘Harsham-Geriatric Care’ a project for elderly care is therefore designed as an enterprise for geriatric care across the state addressing the issues of aged and elderly. The Geriatric care givers can help elderly by running routine errands, and providing a helping hand with the everyday tasks that often become more difficult for the elderly thereby bringing companionship, relationship building and sharing, humor and a sense of purpose back into the lives of the clients.

EVOLUTION:

Kudumbashree Mission is venturing into Geriatric care envisioning to provide special care for the lonely old age people. The project 'Harsham-Happiness Redefined', would ensure homeware and hospital care for the elderly people. Programme aims to create groups of around 100 care givers in each district to assist aged people who live alone or need additional support from a trained care giver, including those who are bedridden. As per the requirement, Kudumbashree invited project proposals for 15 days residential training are invited from training agencies having wide experience in the medical and geriatric field. Evaluation committee of Kudumbashree constituted for this project including an external expert person evaluated technical bids and financial bids received and completed selection process of skill training agencies. This geriatric care training and placement program requires special focus on practical sessions, so we strictly gave instructions to training agencies that hospital attached training only permissible for this project. As per the joint effort of Kudumbashree and skill training agencies, we created a practical oriented training module including 5 days on the job training (OJT). On 15th day of training assessment of care givers will take place based on practical and theoretical knowledge gained from the course. Representative of Kudumbashree mission and examiners of training agency including an external examiner will evaluate each member for the issuance of certification. Each care giver will get 2 Sets of uniforms, ID card, Certificate in order to prove their identity as trained Kudumbashree care giver. Free food, Accommodation and One time actual TA is providing to each trainees. Launching of Harsham program was inaugurated at Kozhikode on 17 May 2018 by Sri. KT Jaleel, honorable minister for local administration. The Harsham training programme is implementing with financial assistance from the Kerala Academy for Skill Excellence plans to provide training and job assistance for around 1,000 women under Kudumbashree Mission this year. The programme will be implemented with the support of HAP (Health Action by People), an NGO and the Hindustan Latex Family Planning and Promotion Council (HLFPPT). The training programme will be extended to other districts in the near future. The working of the programme would be in the model of Micro enterprises. Those aged below 55 years, with good physical capabilities and an aptitude for serving the society would be considered for the programme. The respective District Mission would select the Geriatric Care executives in the districts. The beneficiaries may avail the services of the Harsham Programme through call centre and web portal. The volunteers will collect the details of the people who have requested for services or care will later impart the services. As part of the state government's welfare programmes, the local bodies have already initiated a palliative care project aiming to turn Kerala into an elderly-friendly state. Many aged people, those who are

Women trained in geriatric care

Kudumbasree's Statewide venture



Kudumbasree Mission executive director S. Harikishore with the participants of a geriatric care training programme in Thiruvananthapuram on Friday.

STAFF REPORTER
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kudumbasree's new scheme to provide care to the elderly is turning out to be a success by ensuring well-paying jobs for women.

Women across the State who have received training under the 'Harsham-happiness redefined' scheme have been offered starting salaries up to ₹20,000 by various agencies. Training is being provided by tying up with service providers such as Hindustan Latex Family

Planning and Promotion Council, Health Action by People (HAP).

Kudumbasree aims at training 1,000 people in geriatric care and ensure jobs for them this year, a statement here said. The elderly will be provided professional care and support in homes or hospitals. Food and medicines, checks for sugar and blood pressure, and giving baths to bedridden patients are among the services provided under Harsham.

bedridden, have been receiving care under the project. But shortage of volunteers and employees is still a major hurdle, and many needy people have been denied care in time. The Harsham Programme will be a solution for that issue.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

Elder care service is a new business area having huge demand for man power in Kerala. Today there are so many business entities are working in this area without having trained care givers as well as ownership. Manpower requirement is huge and certain for this business, but still we are facing scarcity for care givers due to some challenges in our society.

Some of the challenges in home care service are,

- Lack of compassionate people with a heart for seniors,
- Unavailability of trained care giver,
- Reluctance of female care givers to work at night.
- Reluctance of educated persons to work as home care provider.

- Attitude of society towards a home care service provider.
- Low social acceptance of this job in our society.
- Mistrust in caregiver.
- Exploitation of caregiver as servant.
- Lack of family support.
- Lack of coordination.

Due to above challenges, many geriatric care projects and businesses are now facing a no way situation.

Geriatric care projects have huge demand in our society, but we have to address above challenges in a comprehensive manner to form a sustainable enterprise. Through Harsham geriatric care project, Kudumbashree is now trying to form special ventures that will address above challenges in a certain limit.

Trained caregivers have lots of opportunities available in the market. Out of these, we can categorise opportunities in to two,

First one is wage employment opportunity, being a care giver one can sell his/her services to those needy people and can earn income based on hourly or daily or monthly service. Second one is starting a Micro Enterprise with the support of a team or individually and providing various services that a geriatric care person and his/her children expected from a care giver.

Some of the opportunities of Harsham care givers are listed here,

- Home care provider for elderly
- Hospital Bystander for patients
- Old age home assistance
- Running Geriatric Home stay
- Palliative care assistance
- Short term assistance based on elderly needs like, assistance in Bank/ Treasury transactions, Mobile Library service for eldercare, News paper or book reading service for elderly who are staying alone, grocery shopping assistance...
- Assistance to lonely aged people in video/voice chatting with their children who is staying abroad and very keen to know about their daily activities and health assurance.
- Conducting short tours
- Lab test assistance, Home based testing
- Assistance in taking various appointments for elder people.
- Formation of oldies club for enhancing cooperation among peer group
- Support for engaging small income generation works like crafts that will give mental happiness.
- Meal preparation and supply based on doctors prescriptions- Healthy and Tasty meals.
- Friendly conversation and mentally-engaging activities

- Attentive monitoring of medication schedules
- Personal care assistance with any daily routines
- Transportation for medical appointments and outings ...

By constituting Enterprises for geriatric care services, sustainable income generation can be achieved with the support of Kudumbashree network. We can support such enterprises by giving technical, financial, training assistance to become sustainable enterprises.

COMPARISON:

WHAT MAKE US DIFFERENT?

We understand what makes a quality caregiver.

- Harsham caregivers are first and foremost compassionate people with a heart for seniors.
- All our caregivers are well trained, certified professionals having very fine knowledge in elder care services.
- All our care givers are screened, bonded, insured and have undergone a comprehensive background check.
- We're different—not just in the types of health care services we offer, but in the way we deliver them.
- Our services are available all over Kerala through Kudumbashree network.
- Each care giver has been trained by staff members who have extensive background in health and human services

With the support of Kudumbashree label, trust can be achieved easily by ensuring quality services to needy people. Kudumbashree being one of the largest women network in India, lots of business tie ups, marketing possibilities, training assistance, technical assistance, enterprise formation assistance, government support etc can be achieved easily and which will be a great support for any individual to earn a respectful income.

PROGRAM PLANNING & EXECUTION:

Kudumbashree's Harsham geriatric care project is designed to provide geriatric care training and placement



Harsham Training at Baby Memorial Hospital, Calicut

assistance to 1000 Kudumbashree members, and thereby ensuring care giver service of trained personals to elder people.

As per the objective of this program, Kudumbashree shortlisted skill training agencies through tender process and started hospital based residential training to selected persons. Selection of beneficiaries is done through district mission after giving orientation about the programme.

CANDIDATE SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must be a Kudumbashree member
- Priority to Nursing related education
- Age must be below 55 & should have good physique
- Reading and writing capacity in English and Malayalam preferred
- Should have pleasing attitude and interest to work in home care service
- Health check up/police verification is also required for the selection.

Selected members will get 15 days hospital based geriatric care training. Residential mode of training is providing with free food, Accommodation. Hospital based training will ensure good practical exposure and training facilities to each care giver. Last five days on the job training

will ensure more exposure to trainees in getting touch with patients.

Practical based assessment of each care giver will take place on the final day in the presence of Kudumbashree official and an external examiner. Qualified trainees will get valid certificate and ID card from Kudumbashree to serve the geriatric personal.

Refresher trainings and care home based live job training opportunities are also included to increase the efficiency of the care giver. Monitoring and evaluation of care givers will help us to find gaps in their efficiency and it will help us to improve training modules.

JOB ASSISTANCE:

Placement assistance of Harsham trainees is vested on training agencies along with Kudumbashree. For various placement assistance, Kudumbashree is providing call centre and web portal facilities to collect requirements from the clients and ensuring timely feedback. We are also ensuring tie ups with both private health sector agencies and government organisations to provide job along with the completion of training. Also we are providing technical and financial support for care givers to form related micro enterprises.



Harsham Training, Baby Memorial Hospital, Calicut

Monitoring is one of the main things that are to be done to evaluate client and caregiver. Using the support of Gender field level executives and MEC system, requirement evaluation is carried out with a business model and placement is ensured for genuine requirements. Advance payment is ensured for care giver, if the placement is done

through Kudumbashree system and payment is allowed after the completion of work. Reimbursement is done to client if any inconvenience or difficulty rose with in the stipulated periods. In this way Kudumbashree is trying to implement a business model that will ensure quality service and decent income to care givers.

CURRENT STATUS AND CHALLENGES:

Harsham is a challenging project that needs to address lots of difficulties from selection to placement. Kudumbashree recently completed training of 69 persons from various districts and out of these 20 persons got care giver jobs through us. After the completion of initial batches of training, we are now looking for clearing the challenges occurred during the selection and placement stages for making more efficiency in the system.

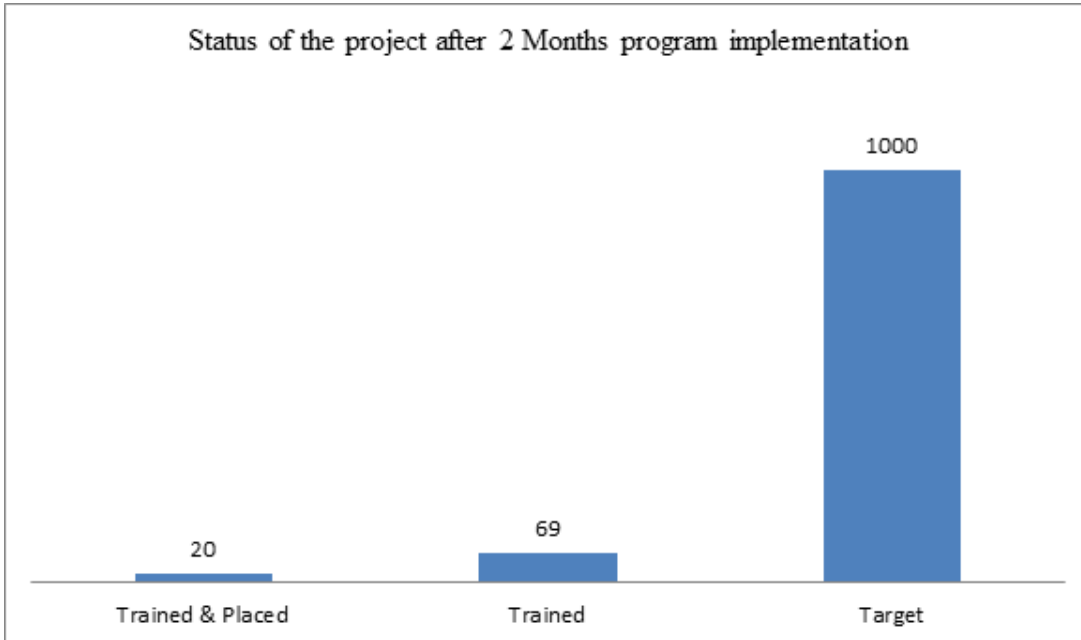
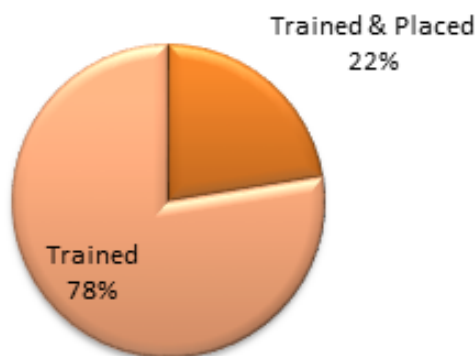


Table 1: Current status of Harsham project.

No	Districts	Target	No of Geriatric Care Executives trained	No of Geriatric Care Executives got placement
1	Thiruvananthapuram	90	17	13
2	Kollam	90	6	3
3	Pathanamthitta	70	5	0
4	Alappuzha	70	0	0
5	Kottayam	90	7	0
6	Idukki	30	0	0
7	Ernakulam	90	0	0
8	Thrissur	70	0	0
9	Palakkad	70	0	0
10	Malappuram	60	0	0
11	Kozhikode	90	8	0
12	Wayanad	30	8	3
13	Kannur	90	10	0
14	Kasaragod	60	8	1
	Total	1000	69	20

Table1: Status report of Harsham-geriatric care training and placement program after the completion of 2 Months training.

Placement Percentage after 2 Months of project implementation



BUSINESS MODEL & FUTURE ASPECTS:

So far Kudumbashree is providing placement support to Harsham caregivers in getting home care and hospital care services with our effective networking system. We would like to setup various business models for supporting trained caregivers in getting a viable business. We should address each challenge in an effective manner to make a successful model.

With the experience gained from the initial batches, we would like to make some changes that will increase the effectiveness of the program. For establishing a viable business model, we should start our efforts from the selection process onwards. Currently we are focussing on areas in each district where the requirement is highest and trying to generate a group of minimum 4 to 5 members for training. Training will be provided on group's basis and in this way we are encouraging Micro Enterprise groups for making a viable enterprise. One training batch will consists of 6 to 8 such groups. We are focussing on the implementation of enterprises models during the training stage itself and after the successful completion of training; Kudumbashree will give various assistance after the evaluation of each group and their requirements. Technical, Financial, Training and Marketing support will be provided to create a business enterprise.

We will promote individual enterprise as well by sharing requirements through our call centre and web portal facilities especially created for this project. Upon receiving requirements, we will share them with enterprises in respective districts and monitoring is done with the support of a networking team of Kudumbashree. Kudumbashree MEC, Gender field level volunteers will form a networking group and they will be paid on commission basis. We are focussing on quality of works so a high profile enterprise model will be established to support people who are looking for caregiver assistance. Strict monitoring through district



Harsham caregiver receiving certificate from Executive Director, Kudumbashree @ NIMS Medicity, Neyyattinkara, Trivandrum

based monitoring team will assess the need and assistance to be given for each enterprise. This monitoring team will headed by ADMC-ME and the quality of service is the main criteria to be evaluated. Enterprise executive committee must consists of representative from Kudumbashree and it will be decided by Block Coordinator of Kudumbashree, he himself or a member from CDS can also function as representative of executive committee. Business enterprise can fix their fee and types of services they can provide based on the decision of their executive committee. We are also looking for the formation of caregiver consortium to establish a state level competent network to support each individual care givers through proper coordination.

IMPACTS

Harsham geriatric care project is designed to make a high impact in our society by supplying trained care giver support in all over Kerala. Kudumbashree, one of the largest women network in India and having an effective network all over Kerala can contribute lots of services than any other organisation. We already have lots of merits like

wide coverage throughout our state, 40+Lakhs of women members willing to work in service sector, government support, availability of technical persons to support enterprise formation, in built marketing facility...so it is easy for as to build a great team for Harsham through proper coordination of our networks.

Today lots of private agencies are providing geriatric care services in some districts of Kerala. But most of them are facing lack of employees and providing unskilled labourers without any background check. Trust is a major factor in this kind of service oriented industry, Being a Kudumbashree member, people can trust Harsham care givers as they are selected with back ground verification, well trained, certified and having a back up of a great network. By implementing Harsham project in all districts of Kerala, availability of trained care giver service is ensured though a professional network to elderly people who are looking for assistance. Due to impact of this project unskilled care givers will not exist and all such enterprise

will make necessary things to ensure quality of care giver services. Thereby, Elder people will get a decent and respectful life in Kerala and we can set a national model for elder care service.

Kudumbashree is an organization working for the empowerment of women through need based enterprise interventions. The project "Harsham" by the Kudumbashree will work with a motive for promoting health of the elderly by providing a set of home based comprehensive services which could address majority of the mentioned problems faced by the geriatric population and will aid in healthy ageing. We are positively looking for the effective implementation of this project by concentrating on the various needs of elderly and by providing maximum employment opportunities to Kudumbashree members. We hope by 2019, some best Kudumbashree models will be established in Kerala for providing elder care assistance and it will set some remarkable identity to us.



Harsham care givers with Executive Director, NIMS Medicity, Trivandrum