Editorial

The monsoon gods have been bountiful this year. As we can see in the photographs above, the fields are lush and green and the village canals and ponds are full. It is a much-needed respite from the previous dry months.

The Ganesh puja this year was particularly joyful thanks to the rains.

We hope the year ahead proves productive, prosperous and healthy.
Indrani

I am from Chennai and settled in Mathur village after marriage. I am working at Auroville Health Centre as a health worker since ten years. I wanted to do nursing but was able to complete only twelfth grade. I am satisfied with the work I am doing.

I took a long time initially to know the health problems and the needs of my village.

Now after 10 years, I am easily able to notice health problems and can help to prevent diseases in my village. Under my care are two colonies and the main village, with an approximate population of 2000 people in total.

The government health department staffs come to me whenever they want some health information about my village.

Recently, in this monsoon season two people from my village got dengue fever and were admitted in JIPMER hospital. I informed the Health Department immediately, following which they came and did a thorough checking and clearing of our village. There have been no more cases of Dengue.

In the evenings I do dressing of wounds and one afternoon a week I teach fifth grade school children at my own village about health-hygiene. The children always welcome me as they know that I bring fun-activities to the class. I love to work with them as they are eager to learn.

At the end of every year I prepare a health program with the school children on parents’ day, to guide the villagers. Last year, we performed a skit on tuberculosis. The children performed well and the villagers gained some information.
Dhannamal

I belong to the village Appirampet. I have been a health worker about 25 years. I have learned a lot about health and hygiene.

I follow-up chronic patients of hypertension and diabetes, to check if they are taking their medications regularly and correctly.

Elderly patients often forget to take medicines. I see when I do house visits that people are more aware of their health than before.

Like the other health workers I too do dressings daily at the sub centre.

Santha Kumari

I joined Health Centre 28 years ago. I was trained for three months at the Health Centre to dress wounds and motivate sick patients to visit the doctor.

One day, a woman while grazing her buffalos in the field, got gouged in the stomach area by the horn of a buffalo, exposing her intestines. The villagers wrapped a cloth around her middle and took her to the nearest hospital. It took her three months in hospital and three more months doing dressings at home to heal fully.
Laxmi

I was selected by Health Centre almost 27 years ago, along with two other health workers, since it is a big village. The other two stopped work after 3-5 years, but I have continued.

My work involves three house visits a day, dressing of wounds in the sub centre in the evenings and follow up of chronic patients who are taking medications.

One morning during my usual house visits a few years ago, a 60 year old woman living in a small hut pulled me inside her house.

She showed me a small swelling in her breast. I told her to see the doctor immediately. Many weeks passed before I saw her again. I asked her how she was and she smiled and told me that she was old, the swelling was not painful and that it would go away. I told her she must visit the hospital the next day, where she was admitted the same day and underwent mastectomy. I would visit her regularly to dress the wound.

Whenever I see her, she gives me a smile.

Maniammal

I am from Rayaputhupakam village working as a health worker in Auroville Health Centre for nearly 27 years now. I finished my eighth grade and was fortunate enough to be selected as a health worker.
I am from Rayaputhupakam but settled in Eddyanchavdy village. I joined Health Centre six years ago. I got three months training at the Health Centre.

My village had no clean drinking water for many years. When the doctors from Health Centre started consultation in my village, they saw many villagers having water borne diseases like diarrhoea and typhoid. The women always complained about the poor water quality. Finally the Health Centre provided some funds and each family in the village contributed, to make a deep bore well with a storage tank which is still functioning.

Ramani

During my house visits, I found a lot of plastic waste thrown everywhere. Most of the dumps were stinking and overflowing. After the plastic ban in Tamil Nadu people were careful initially. I requested a nearby NGO for help: they mobilized the villagers, brought their own staff and dump trucks and managed to clean the mess. The villagers are presently willing to keep the village clean.