

NWTWS History / Out Patient support request. January 2018

Nilgiris Wynaad Tribal Welfare Society is a registered NGO set up in 1978 to provide free medical and other care to the Hill Tribe inhabitants of the adjoining districts of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. It is situated at Ambalamoola between Gudalur and Sultan's Battery, approximately equidistant from Ootacamund, Mysore and Calicut in an area that was once sub tropical rainforest on the borders of the Western Ghats. The Hill Tribe clients are Paniya, Betta Kurumba, Kathu Naicka and Mulla Kurumba, officially classified by government as 'Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups'.

It is funded partly from its own 17 acre farm, Government grants, donor agencies and private donations.

In 1978 a roadside dispensary and quarters were built at Ambalamoola on land provided by the Tamil Nadu Government. There were no other facilities in the area. There was much superstition and reluctance to accept treatment by shy and timid peoples, but by hard work, persistence and treating Tribals with respect and in a way which fitted in with their needs and priorities, a good and lasting relationship of trust was built up and the clinic soon became very popular with up to 200 patients per day served by 3 staff.

In-patients were occasionally admitted or sent to local hospitals or even distant medical colleges when necessary. A good relationship was built up with doctors in Sultan's Battery, the nearest town, some of whom were most helpful. Apart from daily clinics, visits were made to distant remote hamlets with a box of medicines to treat seriously ill patients or to assist in childbirth. This gave insight into home conditions and other problems as well as there being an opportunity to treat those who were reluctant or unable to come to the dispensary. Regular evening medical camps were later held in remote villages, sponsored at various times by Canara Bank (Sultan's Battery) and Wynaad Sarva Seva Mandalam. This in addition to treating many people at home also further increased the numbers attending the clinic.

In 1986 a first case of leprosy was detected. With outside specialist help a small contact survey conducted and many more cases were found. An experienced leprosy worker was appointed and Tribal staff were sent for training at Karigiri (India's premier leprosy institution) to form a team which systematically surveyed every nook and corner of Gudalur and Pandalur taluks, as well as adjoining areas in Kerala with high Tribal populations. Over the years almost 600 cases were identified and treated. By hard work, knowing the local culture and being used to interacting with Tribals, the disease has virtually been eradicated, though occasional cases still turn up. This work has been funded by Damien Foundation (Belgium) and latterly also by the TN government.

In 2000 a 12 bedded hospital was built with funds and practical help from Chantier Damien Belgium. This provided a much needed facility and catered for up to 400 in patients per year. In 2007 the TN Government provided a vehicle, funding and medicines under the Tamil Nadu Health Services Project (TNHSP) to undertake daily medical camps in remote villages. The team includes a doctor, nurse, lab technician and driver. The funding also covers the cost of in patients and has made a very big contribution to alleviating the medical needs of poor and disadvantaged Tribal patients.

Over the years, disease patterns have changed. Initially there was a pattern of simple illnesses like scabies, anaemia, chest infections, dysentery, etc. which became life

threatening because of long term neglect and reluctance to seek treatment. Nowadays, this type of case is much less common, however the diseases of “civilisation” are now prevalent: Hypertension, stroke, diabetes etc.

There is now a greater willingness and the understanding by Tribal people of the need to seek early treatment. More facilities including government Primary Health Centres have come up on both sides of the border which can fulfil a great need, depending on the doctor posted there. However, there are still a good number of patients who fall through the net for various reasons, or simply prefer to come to us. Our staff, many of them Tribal, speak the local languages and are sympathetic and understanding of Tribal priorities and way of life.

TODAY Our outpatient clinic sees about 650 patients per month. Current staff includes a doctor, lab technician, health co ordinator and 2 nurses, in addition to the mobile clinic staff and health educators. We are a government recognised laboratory for Tb, HIV and leprosy. Our hospital is the only free in-patient facility in Pandalur Taluk. We assist government in immunisation programmes, run eye camps and a children's health education troupe which visits villages and performs street theatre in the Tribal languages.

FUNDING

Our in-patient facility is funded by government under Tamil Nadu Health Services Project (TNHSP). The out patient facility is supported only by funds/donations from any other sources.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Residential School for 100 Tribal boys and girls up to age 14 (8th std) under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme (SSA), principally funded by government.

Hostel for 50 Tribal boys and girls with home or other difficulties who would otherwise drop out, who attend local school and continue their education from 8th std up to 12th std. and beyond.

Field Work

- a) Encouraging children in the villages to start and continue their schooling. Monitoring of more than 900 children and follow up of recent drop outs from school.
- b) Obtaining documentation (Aadhar card, ration card, Community certificate, pension etc) for families allowing them to benefit from government schemes and subsidies.

This proposal is for the following:

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| Staff Salaries: | Medical Officer | (70,000 pm) x12 = | 630000.00 |
| | Staff Nurse 1 | (10510 pm) | 94590.00 |

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| Staff Nurse 2 | (8800 pm) | 79200.00 |
| (Above salaries are reduced by 25% as part covered by TNHSP for in-patients) | | |
| Health Co-ordinator | (12925 pm) | 155100.00 |
| Lab Technician | (11690 pm) | 140280.00 |
| Pharmacist | (8000 pm) | 96000.00 |
| Sanitary Worker | (5720 pm) | 68640.00 |
| Medicines | | 257000.00 |
| Lab Expenses | | 25400.00 |
| Patient Referral | | 13741.00 |
| Patient Transport | | 3500.00 |
| Maintenance and admin costs @10% | | 156345.00 |
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| Total request per year with 10% increment annually | | Indian Rs.17,197,96.00 |
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| | | (\$26,750.00) |