



## **Leadership in primary healthcare in Noolpuzha, Kerala Family Health Centre as a step towards climate resilience**

### **GGHH Agenda Goals**

- Leadership

### **Hospital goals**

- Access to primary healthcare
- Digital health
- Waste management
- Reduce energy costs
- Water management

### **Background**

Poor community health is a key determinant of climate vulnerability. Hence, strengthening primary healthcare should be seen as one of the foundational blocks for achieving climate resilience. Healthier communities are more resilient to changing climate, therefore, it needs to be ensured that there is an equitable and affordable access to primary healthcare. The Noolpuzha Family Health Centre (FHC), a primary healthcare facility under the public health system, operates with a vision of providing inclusive, affordable, and equitable primary healthcare to all.

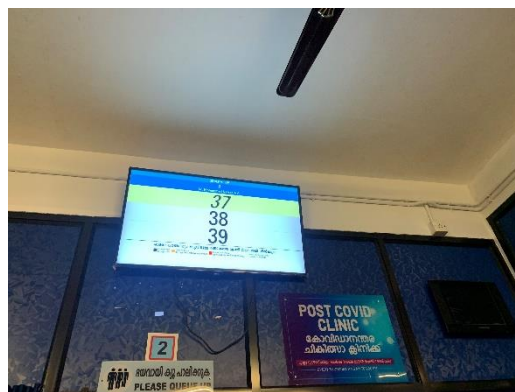
The success and uniqueness of this FHC can be attributed to Kerala's decentralised planning, which started with People's Plan Campaign in 1996. It was a pioneering movement towards empowering the Local Self Government bodies. Under the campaign, the state government committed to devolve 35-40 percent of the plan or development budget to LSGs. Kerala follows a multi-stage decentralised planning process, which involves multiple stakeholders from the concerned sectors, including the residents. After consultation with stakeholders, decisions are made regarding programmatic needs and budgets. This kind of decentralised planning helps to include voices at the ground level and ensures representation of both the community and community healthcare providers.

Dr Dahar Mohammed, the Medical Officer of Noolpuzha FHC, has been at the forefront of providing quality primary healthcare services to the residents of Noolpuzha. Since decentralisation, different levels of healthcare facilities have been under the control of the respective levels of government. This FHC is under the authority of Noolpuzha gram panchayat. Driven by his own vision to develop a sustainable healthcare facility and leveraging the benefits afforded by decentralised planning, Dr Dahar has been very proactive in pursuing funds for the implementation of primary healthcare initiatives. It is his vision to ensure that the tribal population of Noolpuzha has access to all primary healthcare services, that too of good quality.

## Interventions implemented

### Digital health

Noolpuzha FHC operates on an e-health system, an initiative under Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission. The digitisation began in the year of 2018. The users of the healthcare facility are issued an eHealth card, which is linked with their Aadhar card (India's unique identity system for its residents). The user's health records are linked with the health ID number. 'Paperless prescription' is a unique feature of this FHC. The doctor feeds the prescription in the health system which is forwarded to the pharmacy located in the same premises. Thus, the e-health system cuts down on the use of paper, with health records, referrals, and prescription being done online. Printout of treatment history is provided to patients only when they demand it.



### Solar energy and water management

Water heating and outer lighting are powered by solar energy. The solar water heater has a capacity of 300 litres. The FHC is in talks with Kerala electricity board for solarisation of the entire facility.



The FHC has a rainwater harvesting setup connected to a tank with a capacity of 2000 litres. The water that is collected is used for gardening.



### Waste management

The FHC has a composting pit on its premises, with a capacity of 50 litres. All the food waste that is generated is dumped into the composting pit. The compost is used for gardening and sold to the people.



Biomedical waste is segregated at the point of generation. The facility has colour coded bins for different types of biomedical waste, as outlined in the Biomedical Waste Management Rules, 2016. Every two days, the biomedical waste is collected and taken for treatment by IMAGE (Indian Medical Association Goes Ecofriendly). IMAGE is a state-of-the-art common biomedical waste treatment and disposal facility, established by the Kerala state chapter of Indian Medical Association.



For e-waste, the collection is done as needed by Clean Kerala Company Limited, formed under the Local Self Government department, Govt. of Kerala, for management of non-biodegradable solid waste.

### Other green initiatives

Care has been taken that existing trees are not cut during construction of new structures and renovations that took place in 2016. Any new structures that were built were made around the existing trees.

There is an electric auto on the premises which is used for picking up and dropping certain sections of patients, especially patients from Adivasi (tribal) hamlets. This is a step towards improving health services in tribal regions, as Noolpuzha is the second largest tribal populated Panchayat (local body) in Kerala. The effort is proving to be beneficial in reducing the GHG emissions that come from patient commutation in regular vehicles that run on fossil fuels. The administration is planning to increase the number of electric vehicles for outreach activities.

The FHC also offers telemedicine services once a week, for an hour. This is used for getting opinions from specialist doctors. Telemedicine can help in reducing patients' vehicle traffic which in turn reduces the GHG emissions.



### **Demographic information**

This Family Health Centre is located in Noolpuzha, a village in Wayanad district of southern state of Kerala. It is the second largest tribal-populated Panchayat in Kerala. Noolpuzha's estimated population is around 16,000. The FHC is a primary healthcare provider, under the public health system of Kerala. It provides services across various sections such as deliveries, non-communicable diseases, vector borne diseases, other communicable diseases, etc.

### **Links**

To learn more about Health and Environment Leadership Platform and its members:

<https://greenhospitalsindia.com/>

To gain access to HELP's information, education, and communication materials and other case studies:

<https://greenhospitalsindia.com/case-studies/>

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