India Health Policy & Systems Research Fellowship

Progress Update
July-October 2021

indiahpsrfellowships.org
shilpa.john@hstp.org.in
@HPSRIndia

The fellowship aims to enhance capacity of mid-career public health professionals in health policy and systems research methods to strengthen evidence-based policymaking in health. This blended training program, spread over a period of 18 months, includes online, face-to-face modules & mentorship for conducting a HPSR study. Twenty fellows are part of Cohort 2021.

An initiative of Health Systems Transformation Platform, the fellowship is organized in collaboration with eminent partners and is supported by Tata Trusts, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and ACCESS Health International.

We are pleased to share our progress with our stakeholders, friends & well-wishers. Reach out to us for sharing your opinions, queries and exploring collaborations or directing us to new avenues to strengthen our resolve for improving Indian health systems.

Completion of Face-to-Face training session

Launched in January 2021, the fellowship trains 20 fellows every year. The online phase for Cohort 2021 was completed in June 2021. The Face-to-Face training session was organised from 30 Aug - 4 Sept 2021 in New Delhi. The aim was to organize an in-person interaction with peers and faculty to strengthen the concepts taught in the online phase and allow fellows to reflect, refine & explore the paradigms of their research question further. The interactions & engagements were interspersed with group work and a facilitated peer review process providing constructive and specific feedback to each fellow.

The sessions were facilitated by core faculty - N Devadasan, Dorothy Lall, Sumit Kane, Prashanth NS, Rakhal Gaitonde, Devaki Nambiar & external expert Surekha Garimella. A session on understanding policy interface for evidence-based decision making in health was organized with Ms Arti Ahuja (Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare). For more details
Mentoring & Implementation Phase

By the end of the face to face training, the fellows refined & developed high value health policy & systems research proposals. These proposals were reviewed by a panel of HPSR experts comprising the core faculty and John Porter (Professor, LSHTM), Surekha Garimella (Senior Research Fellow, TGI India) & Rajesh Kumar (Technical Advisor, HSTP).

**Anika Juneja**, PhD fellow, Institute of Public Health Bengaluru  
**Mentor**: Prof. Nakkeeran Nanjippan, Dr BR Ambedkar University

**Research**: How neighbourhood shapes access to healthcare for two Adivasi communities in central and southern India?

**Antony Stanley**, Research Associate, Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute of Medical Sciences & Technology  
**Mentor**: Prof. Jeemon P, SCTIMST

**Research**: Which is the most cost-effective renal replacement therapy among HD, CAPD and renal transplantation? What are the determinants and dynamics of treatment decision making regarding end-stage renal disease patients in Kerala?

**Sabu K U**, Impact Assessment Lead, Nourishing School Foundation  
**Mentor**: Prof. Kara Hanson, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

**Research**: How, why and under what condition has the POSHAN Abhiyaan program contributed to the changes in Anganwadi service delivery, service utilisation and child nutritional status of the Paniya community?

**Ankita Mukherjee**, Qualitative Researcher, The George Institute for Global Health India  
**Mentor**: Dr Rajani Ved, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India

**Research**: What are the facilitators and barriers that can impact the capacity of rural Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) to operationalize mental health related guidelines in Faridabad district in the state of Haryana?

**Mintu Moni Sarma**, Programme in Charge, The Ant  
**Mentor**: Dr Renu Khanna, Sahaj

**Research**: Why patients are visiting the non-specialized paid services provided by non-government entity for mentally ill, despite having specialized public health facilities, in a district of lower Assam, affected by repeated violent conflicts?

**Tanu Anand**, Scientist D, Indian Council of Medical Research  
**Mentor**: Prof. Shankar Prinja, School of Public Health, PGIMER

**Research**: What are morbidity profile, patterns of healthcare utilization and out of expenditure on healthcare among elderly and factors (socio-demographic, economic and clinical) associated with them in Longitudinal Ageing Study of India Wave 1? What are the reasons for such patterns?

**Harsha Joshi**, Program Officer, India Primary Health Care Initiative Project  
**Mentor**: Prof. Helen Schneider, School of Public Health, UWC

**Research**: How is health equity conceptualized in the national ‘Health and Wellness Centre’ policy documents in India?

**Ponnambily Chandy**, Asst Professor, Sathyabhamma College of Nursing  
**Mentor**: Prof. Bart Criel, ITM Antwerp

**Research**: What are the determinants within the health system at various levels, micro, meso and macro for poor retention of nurses in rural Tamil Nadu PHCs?
Akanksha Sonal, Asst Professor, King George Medical University  
**Mentor:** Dr Sumegha Asthana, Independent Expert

**Research:** How are mental health needs of older adults addressed in policies and programs of central and different state governments of India?

Anuj Ghanekar, Social Anthropologist, Urban Health & Climate Resilience Center of Excellence  
**Mentor:** Prof. Greg Armstrong, Nossal Institute for Global Health

**Research:** What processes and mechanisms determine the responsiveness of urban primary health centers in Surat towards primary healthcare of adolescents in order to implement RKSK?

Gitismita Naik, Independent Researcher  
**Mentor:** Dr Sridhar Kadam, Indian Institute of Public Health Bhubaneswar

**Research:** Why are there barriers to Antenatal care for Hypertensive Disorders of Pregnancy at primary level health system in Jharsuguda district of western Odisha? What works in providing standard antenatal care at primary level health system for Hypertensive Disorders of Pregnancy?

Rekha Ravindran, Senior Research Officer, State Health Systems Resource Centre  
**Mentor:** Dr Jagnoor Jagnoor, The George Institute of Global Health

**Research:** How well is the State Trauma Action Plan being implemented in Kerala, India?

Jithesh V, Asst Director, Kerala Health Services  
**Mentor:** Dr Kerry Scott, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

**Research:** What individual, community and health system factors underpin the Paniya community’s low utilization of government health care services in Wayanad, Kerala?

Sapna Mishra, Independent Researcher  
**Mentor:** Prof. Sivakami Muthusamy, School of Health Systems Studies, TISS

**Research:** Why adult workers processing e-waste in the unorganized e-waste sector and their family members in a municipal ward of Hyderabad are not taking COVID-19 vaccines?

Sunu Thomas, Independent Researcher  
**Mentor:** Prof. Rama Baru, Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health, JNU

**Research:** How infertility is constructed in the policy discourse in India?

Deepshikha Chetri, Senior Analyst, The Ballot House (UK)  
**Mentor:** Prof. Asha George, School of Public Health, UWC

**Research:** What are the facilitators and barriers that influence the uptake of early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF) among tribal women from an aspirational district of Rajasthan? Why do these facilitators and barriers exist?

Deepak Behera, Asst Professor, Manipal Academy of Higher Education  
**Mentor:** Prof Sumit Kane, Nossal Institute for Global Health

**Research:** What are the services provided in a palliative care center in Odisha for Terminal cases of cancer patients?