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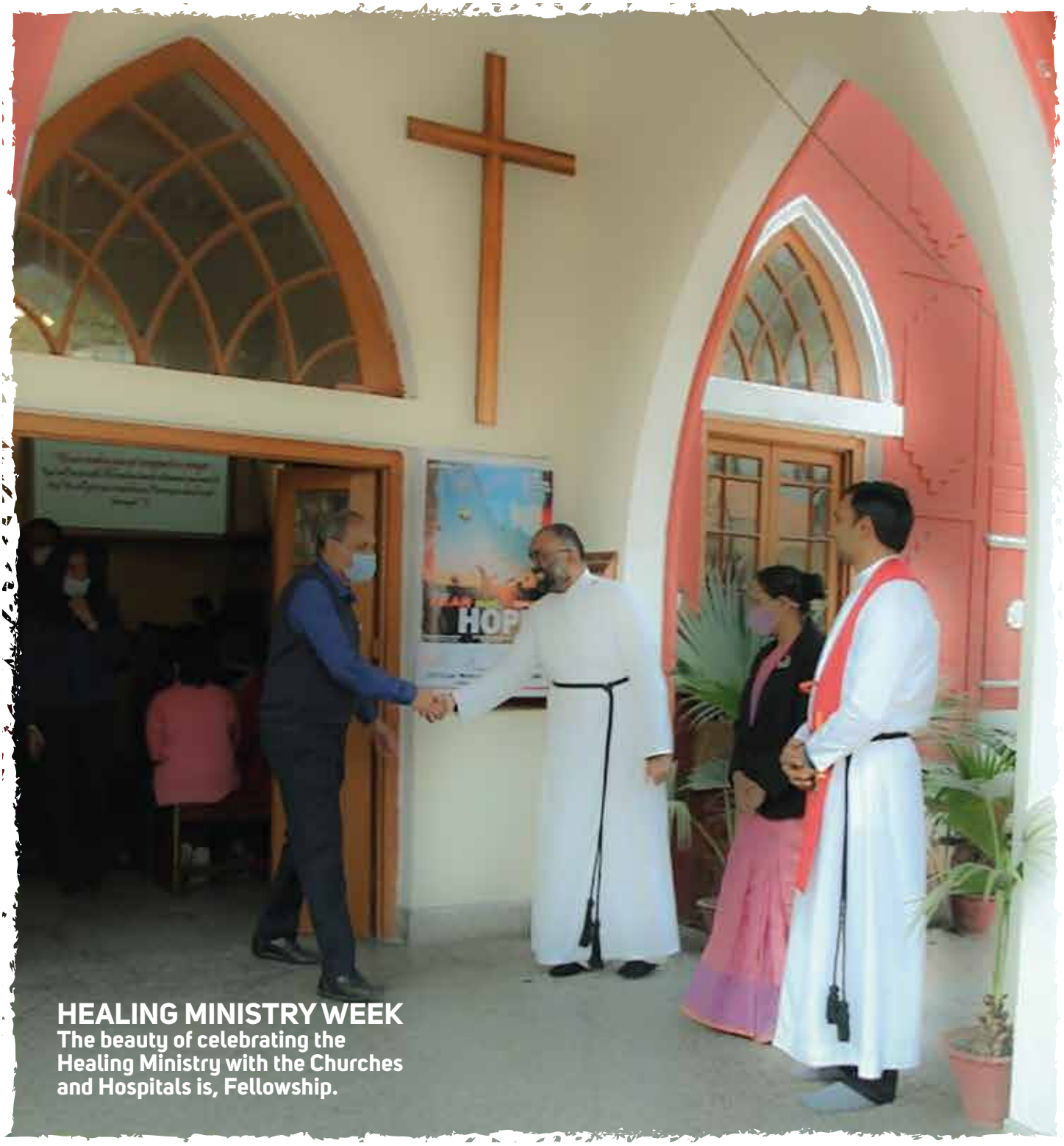
Life for All

A Quarterly Newsletter of Christian Medical Association of India



HEALING MINISTRY WEEK

The beauty of celebrating the Healing Ministry with the Churches and Hospitals is, Fellowship.

Word from General Secretary

HEALING MINISTRY 2022 – "FEAR NOT. HOPE"

ISAIAH 41:10

Dr Priya John
GENERAL SECRETARY
CMAI

One understanding or even objective of the Healing Ministry is to heal relationships. Relationships between man and himself, man and man, man and his environment and most important, man and his Creator. Within this complexity of relationships (including the gender bias), a theme has emerged.

> ***A THEME WHICH IS RELEVANT FOR THE TIMES, UNIQUE TO OUR FAITH AND AS REAL AS IT GETS.* FEAR NOT. HOPE. FROM THE SCRIPTURES ISAIAH 41:10.**

The full stop after 'not' is vital because it puts an end to all the uncertainty and fear that came with the pandemic. *It brings to a significant close* the emotional and spiritual turmoil that many went through. Be it the loss of a loved one, or falling physically ill, or being stretched beyond normal working hours or faced with the challenge of low income, displacement and providing for a family. Whatever may be the assault on our physical, spiritual, and mental strength, that one word – Hope, invigorates.

The other collateral beauty of celebrating the Healing Ministry with the churches and hospitals is, fellowship. The Tamil word for fellowship, I discovered is *'ikkium'.* It reminded me of IKEA and that reminding me of structures. Structures that are useful and simple. Attractive and different. Make the mundane look wonderful.

> ***I WONDERED WHETHER, THE STRUCTURES WE HAVE AS INSTITUTIONS, ORGANOGRAMS OR EVEN SERVICES, ARE FRIENDLY AND ENCOURAGE FELLOWSHIP.***

I wondered whether, the structures we have as institutions, organograms or even services, are friendly and encourage fellowship.

> ***DO WE TAKE TIME TO BUILD?***
> ***DO WE TAKE TIME TO MAKE THINGS AND OURSELVES BETTER?***
>
> ***DO WE ADD VALUE TO A ROUTINE?***
> ***DO WE THINK OUT OF THE BOX?***
>
> ***DO WE MAKE ORDINARY INTO EXTRAORDINARY?***

Fellowship is a crucial foundation for the sustainability of any of our structures. It is the very fabric of the institution. Fellowship to build one another. Fellowship to provide correct information. Fellowship to allow for vulnerability. Fellowship to facilitate exchange of great practices. And so much more.

CMAI acknowledges its role in promoting and facilitating fellowship among our membership. Fear not. Hope. This theme works for all situations but works best in places with a strong sense of fellowship.

That is why we the CMAI family will strive to do better.

HEALING MINISTRY WEEK CELEBRATIONS ACROSS OUR NETWORK

NURSES: A VOICE TO LEAD- INVEST IN NURSING AND RESPECT RIGHTS TO SECURE GLOBAL HEALTH

~ Shimy Mathew, Nurses League

"ALL OUR SERVICES NEED TO BE CENTERED AROUND THE CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE HEALING MINISTRY"

This year the theme for celebration of International Nurses Day is ***"Nurses: A Voice to Lead- Invest in Nursing and Respect Rights to Secure Global Health".*** We are called to focus on the need to invest in nursing and respect the rights of nurses in order to build resilient, high quality health systems to meet the needs of individuals and communities now and into future (ICN).

As Christian Nurses, we are called to practice nursing with high moral and ethical values. We need to implement high quality systems in our mission hospitals with social relevance, respecting and being sensitive to the rights and culture of our patients and communities we cater to. All our services need to be centered around the core principles of the healing ministry – to serve with love and compassion for the extension of God's Kingdom.

We need to be updated with changing trends in healthcare and the need of our communities, so that the services we provide are relevant to the communities we serve.

We need to stand up for the rights of our nursing fraternity and uphold the dignity of our profession. Nurses need to constantly upgrade their knowledge and skills as per the changing needs in health care. We need to make a difference in the way we deliver teaching learning activities in our schools and colleges of Nursing. There is huge gap in theory and practice in Nursing today with many nurses graduating with inadequate skills for practice. Our Schools and Colleges should stand as icons of excellence producing competent nurses with good moral values. They need to be equipped to be catalysts wherever they go and be agents of change wherever they are placed.

Wishing you all God's blessings as you care for your patients, students and nurses in different capacities and roles that has been entrusted to you.

Let us know if we can help you in any way to accomplish your service. Nurses League can help with trainings and consultancies in any areas related to Nursing practice and education.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI) AND RECOGNITION OF ALLIED HEALTH COURSES

~ Lyric Abraham, AHP Section

"AS ALLIED HEALTH-CARE PROFESSIONALS, WE ARE EAGERLY WAITING TO WITNESS THE FORMATION OF MORE STATE ALLIED HEALTH COUNCILS"

Right to Information Act 2005 mandates timely response to citizen requests for Government information. RTI has gradually transformed to be a useful tool for laypeople to receive information from the Government bodies. The process of the application process involved for RTI is simple. However, it has been revealed that very few citizens come forward to utilize this facility.

The CMAI_Central Education Board, Allied Health Courses is operational in our country for the past 95 years. In 1927, it started as a CMAI Certificate Training in the Medical Laboratory Technology at Arogyavaram Medical Centre Hospital, Andhra Pradesh. The new National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions Act, 2021 passed in parliament on 24th March 2021. Until then there was no regulatory body in India for allied health training. The interim council was formed in September 2021, however, the states except UP are yet to form the proposed state allied health council under the National Commission.

Since 2019, CMAI was trying with various State and Central Government bodies to get accreditation and recognition for our well-sorted Allied Health courses. Currently, we have 60 Training Centres/Hospitals spread all over India. More than 600 students get trained annually receiving 34 courses. CMAI courses are well accepted nationally and even internationally for their high quality and standards.

Recently, CMAI's AHP Section submitted RTIs pertaining to the Allied Health courses recognition to:

1) AICTE (All India Council of Technical Education)
2) Delhi Health and Family Welfare Department
3) Delhi Directorate General of health services, and
4) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Government of India.

Except for MoH & FW other departments remain clueless on regulation and accreditation of Allied Health courses in India.

A response from Ministry of Health and Family welfare to an RTI application:

"With reference to your online RTI application (Regn.no.MOHFW/R/E/22/01172) dated 24.03.2022, insofar as Allied Health Services Section of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is concerned, it is informed that the Christian Medical Association of India Central Education Board is not under the purview of this Section. Further, Interim Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions (ICAHP) to regulate 56 Allied and Healthcare Professions has already been notified as per provisions of the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions Act, 2021. On being fully functional, ICAHP will be mandated to look into related issues. However, you may also seek information from the State Government in the matter"

As Allied Healthcare Professionals, we are eagerly waiting to witness the formation of more State Allied Health Councils. This will bring forth a solution to this chronic and challenging issue. We turn to all our CMAI members, both Individual and at Member Institutions. Kindly remember our ongoing efforts in your prayers and that we witness a constructive and timely support to this endeavor.

HEALING MINISTRY SUNDAY – A TIME OF CELEBRATION AND FELLOWSHIP

~ Regional Coordinators

At CMAI we continue the tradition of celebrating Healing Ministry Week (HMW) along with member hospitals and churches all over India. We are glad to inform that every year, The Catholic Association of India, Catholic Bishops' Conference of India and National Council of Churches in India have come together in support to celebrate the theme – Renew & Restore.

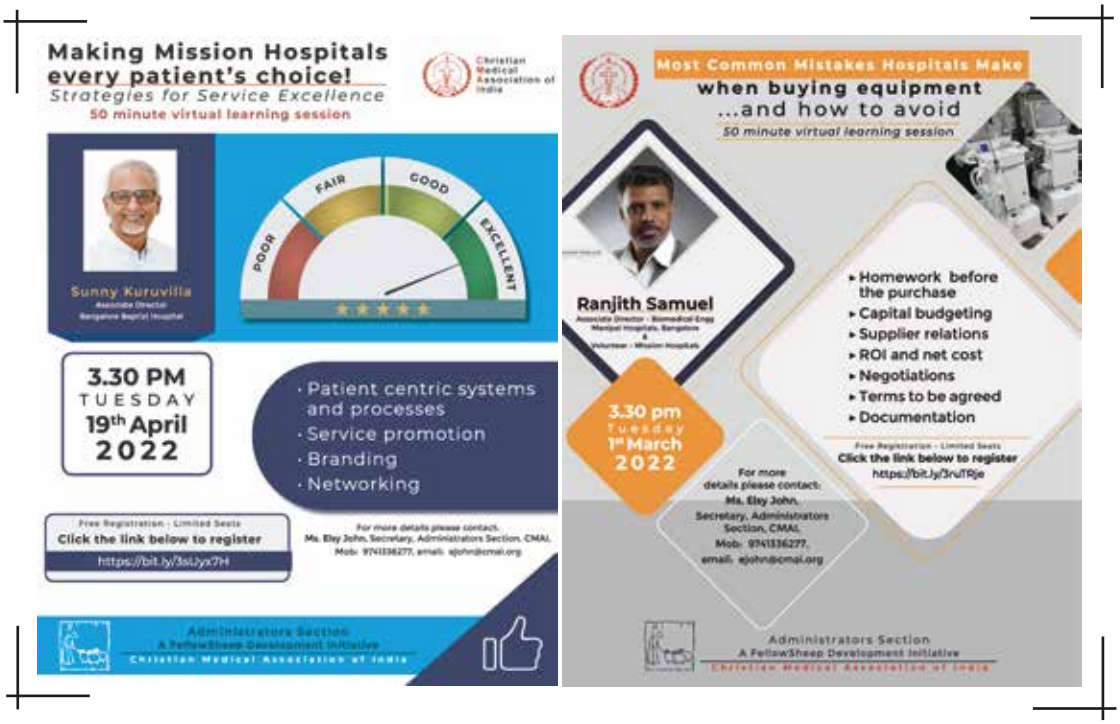
This year in the month of February 2022, we received reports from regions across the country as Healing Ministry Week and Healing Ministry Sunday were celebrated. It is wonderful to hear how the regional committees and our members at mission hospitals along with churches came together. In Bihar, more than 200 participants met each other face to face on 13th February 2022 as the Regional Secretary, Pastors spoke on the theme sharing the Bible study materials.

Likewise, on 20th February the staff, members, healthcare professionals and regional committee met in person for a time of fellowship and thanks-giving in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and mostly all the CMAI regions. The north-west region reported how a college chapel witnessed an overwhelming gathering of more than 160 people including students and staff from Doctors, Nurses, Allied Health Professionals and Administrators sections.

An exclusive promotional video created by CMAI Communication Department was created for HMW Sunday celebrations and disseminated to all the regional teams. The Regional Coordinators in turn shared with Member Institutions, Regional Committees and the enire network. The video features the regional coordinators along with other CMAI staff and the leadership. They spoke on the theme of Hope and on the significance of healing ministry. The video is also published exclusively on CMAI's website on the Healing Ministry page. During various celebrations and programmes the video was reported to be broadcasted online as the gathering later prayed for medical professionals, frontline warriors and the church.

ONGOING VIRTUAL WEBINARS UNDER THE FELLOWSHEEP INITIATIVE

~ Elsy John, Administrators' Section



We are glad to inform you that the Administrators' Section has successfully implemented two thematic webinars so far. The first webinar titled – **"The Art of Fundraising"** targeted the increased challenges and urgent needs of support for the member institutions. Due to the pandemic and many changes that followed, institutions are grappling with shortage of staff, resources and medical supplies. As a result, fundraising continues to be of utmost importance. A 50-Minute virtual webinar was conducted on 1st February 2022 wherein 228 participants attended. Dr. Caroline Elizabeth George, Head of Community Health Division, Bangalore Baptist Hospital was the resource person who talked about exploring CSR opportunities, fundraising ideas, process to pitch for donors and the relevance of fostering long-lasting relationships.

The second webinar was – **"Most Common Mistakes Hospitals Make when Buying Equipment and How to Avoid".** The resource person was Mr. Ranjith Samuel, Associate Director- Biomedical Engineer, Manipal Hospitals, Bangalore & Volunteer – Mission Hospitals. The 50-minute webinar was attended by 260 participants. The areas covered included; home-work before purchasing equipment, how to budget, maintenance supplier relationships, return on investment and net cost, how to negotiate and terms of contract.

We are glad to inform that these sessions have benefited our members and participants. In the series of webinars, for the month of April, another webinar on **"Making Mission Hospitals Every Patient Choice"** was held. We request you on behalf of the Administrators' Section to come forward, encourage others and participate in the coming webinars.

Remember us in your prayers and contact us with suggestions, guidance, and support by sending an email to administratorsection@cmai.org

CHURCH LEADERS CONSULTATION TO UNDERSTAND HESITATION AROUND COVID-19 VACCINATION

~ Christopher Peter, Communication Department

> ***"LEADERS WERE ENCOURAGED TO HELP IN IMPORVING VACCINATION UPTAKE AND PROMOTION"***

Globally, we are made aware that Covid-19 vaccination is a much safer way to protect ourselves from the perils of this pandemic which leads to sickness and even death. Therefore, many countries' administrative offices have shared how nearly the entire population is already vaccinated. In a sharp contrast to this, there are also certain groups and church leadership who believe that the hesitancy towards Covid-19 vaccination is justified.

In the month of March, as part of the Vaccine Promotion project, a 1-day consultation of Church leaders from various denominations was organized. The programme was held at CIHSR Dimapur in Nagaland. In total leaders from 10 denominations participated. In addition to that representatives from theological institutions and media were also present.

The participants received basic knowledge about Covid-19 and Vaccination as the consultation began and towards the second half, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were held.

Interestingly, the opinions, perceptions and assumptions on Covid were shared. Various activities adapted to address Covid by a church denomination at a location was also shared along with the achievements and challenges. The leaders were encouraged to share the necessary support and tools they required to help improve vaccination uptake and promotion.

The project team worked alongside the participants to explain the hesitations around Covid-19 vaccination. This dialogue led to emergence of many practical suggestions.

Following this one-day consultation, a number of video testimonials, sermon outlines, posters and booklets are planned for dissemination.

NEW CAREER TO CARE

~ Rev David Ebenezer, Chaplains' Section

The chaplain section of CMAI is the provision of spiritual care providing sacred presence, support, nurture, and aid in creating meaning for the CMAI staff, hospitals, Churches, and other organizations. Despite the recognized spiritual need of CMAI, I have been appointed as Chaplain Section Secretary on 15th February 2022, if God's willing I will serve for the next five years. Now I may be a poor or incomplete provider of knowledge of the work of the Chaplain Section Secretary, but as days go on, I would provide a more robust understanding of the activities that may help to address to fill the gaps in provider knowledge.

As an introductory stage in the process of my first step in CMAI, I had an orientation program with various heads of section/dept/RCo from 14–28 February 2022 which conveyed to me as follows:

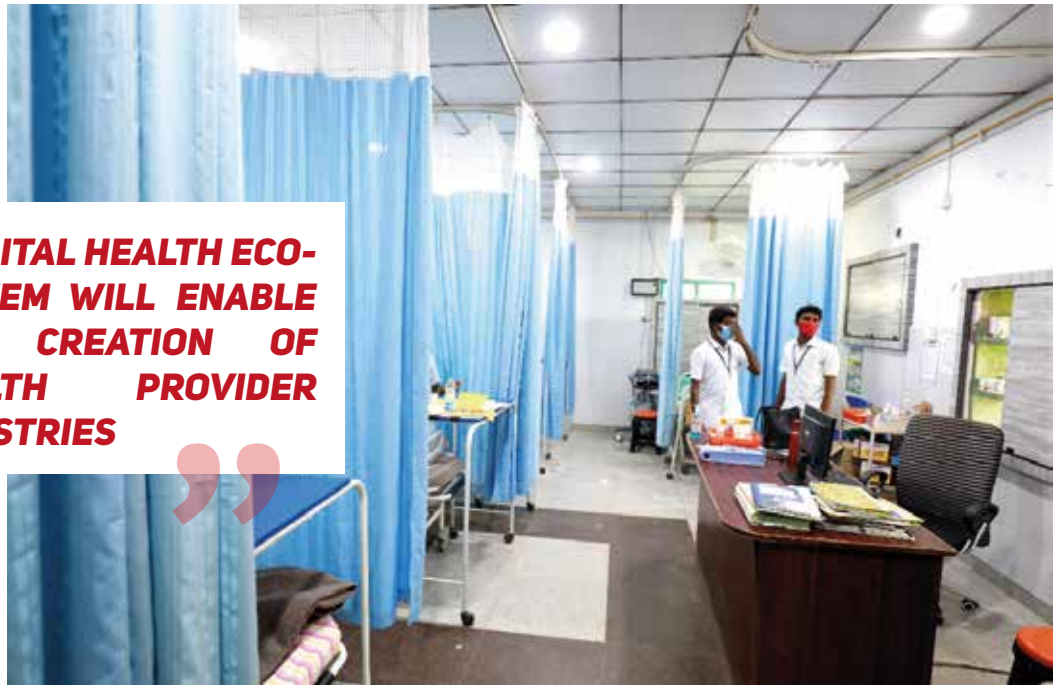
- A review of the firm history of CMAI's objectives
- A detailed presentation of the policies, work rules, and financial benefits
- The responsibilities of this position.

I thank all the orientation mentors that helped my personal and professional development through formal, informal and situational to better assimilate into CMAI.

Present career as a CMAI chaplain, I struggled to understand the "ministry of presence". When I visited CMAI hospitals in the Northeast regions in the month of March 2022, they just want to know that someone is there who cares. I simply represented God at that moment by just being there. When someone starts sharing their concerns with me, it's easy to say, "I know how I feel," along with their own ministerial experiences. As a first step, every day we are connected with any two of the Heads of CMAI institutions and requested them to know their prayer points to pray in the morning devotion. This helped us to provide emotional and spiritual support and found it much more helpful to know their needs. It is a great privilege and honour to serve as Chaplain Section Secretary which is a huge responsibility to explore the concerns of individuals and institutions in ensuring the assurance of the healing ministry to build a healthy society.

THE UNION BUDGET 2022-23 WHAT IS IN FOR US AS HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

~ Dr Abhijeet Sangma, Doctors' Section



> ***A DIGITAL HEALTH ECO-SYSTEM WILL ENABLE THE CREATION OF HEALTH PROVIDER REGISTRIES***

The Finance Minister Srimati Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget 2022 on 1st Feb 2022 in the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic. This budget presented will strive to provide necessary ecosystem for middle class and hopes to lay the foundation for Amrit Kaal in our country from 75 to 100 years of our independence.

The key highlights of the budget are as follows:
- An open platform for National Digital Health Eco-system
- 'National Tele Mental Health Programme' for quality mental health counselling and care
- A network of 23 tele-mental health centres of excellence will be set up

The recently published National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) for 2019-21 reveals a mixed picture of the health indicators in the country. On one side, there are reduction in the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) (40.7 in NFHS 4 to 35.2 in NFHS 5) and Under 5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) (49.7 in NFHS 4 to 41.9 in NFHS 5). On the other side, there is an increase in anaemia among women and children- which will have implications on malnutrition in the future. And the long-term effect of the pandemic might worsen many of these indicators in future. A strong budgetary commitment by the government is one of most critical factors for addressing these concerns.

In general, the budget for health has seen a rise of about 16% in principle between 2021-22 and 2022-23. But, as a percentage of GDP, it has remained at 0.35%.

The focus of the 2022-23 health budget has been to strengthen health infrastructure through programs such as Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY), with a significant increase of nearly 43%.

The launch of the National Tele Mental Health Program is being hailed as a positive step towards

recognizing and addressing mental health issues. The programme strives to build a network of 23 tele-mental health centres of excellence, with the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) being the nodal centre and International Institute of Information Technology-Bangalore (IIITB) providing technology support. This programme has the potential to address the prevalent mental health problems faced by individuals across age, region, gender, and profession. As per National Mental Health Survey 2015-16, which covered 12 Indian states revealed that nearly 15% of adults in India require treatment for one or more mental health disorders. The National Tele Mental Health Programme is a welcome move towards mainstreaming mental wellness and ensuring universal accessibility of the services. The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) launched in September 2021 is a step towards enabling the National Digital Health Ecosystem.

Creating a digital health ecosystem will enable the creation of health provider registries, hopefully in helping in the elimination of quackery.

Primary care, through the key intervention of National Health Mission (NHM), has seen little or no increase from last year (1. 8%), its share in the total health budget has come down from 48% in 2021-22 to 42% in 2022-23.

The higher resource requirements for primary care can also be gauged from the needs submitted by the states to the Union Ministry, of which the central allocations in NHM have been simply 60% and 70% respectively in 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Even the increased allocations under the scheme Human Resources for Health and Medical Education under NHM won't be sufficient to tide over the magnitude of the shortages and needs higher priority in the budget.

The Union Government funded scheme, Health Sector Disaster Preparedness and Response and Human Resources Development for Emergency Medical Services, which caters to building capacities of health professionals, has seen stagnant allocation. Currently, 112 backward districts have been taken into consideration as aspirational districts and there was non-stop monitoring and efforts to bring those districts at par with others in terms of health, education, nutritional status, financial inclusion, and agriculture. Recent studies have found out that 95 districts out of 112 have progressed well. Government has now planned to go down to block level to achieve greater progress in these areas.

Let me know your views about the budget and what would be your Wishlist for the health budget.

WELCOME TO CMAI HQ

Rev. David Ebenezer has joined us as **Secretary, Chaplain Section CMAI.**

He is ordained Minister by both Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church and as well as Anglican Church of Egypt. Rev Ebenezer has pursued two UGC post-graduation degrees, post-graduation in theology, and four units of Clinical Pastoral Education. He served as a Priest, Faculty, Dean of Academics, and Hospital Chaplain with 14 years of experience with the congregation, students, and patients and their families. He has committed to shepherding individuals in Christ, engaging the community for outreach ministry, good planner in devising strategies for ministerial activities, and having expertise in spiritual counseling and mentorship.

Contact Rev Ebenezer at chaplainsecretary@cmai.org

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Being the voice of CMAI { To view past editions visit our website www.cmai.org/publications}

The main function of CMAI's Communication Department is to disseminate information to the CMAI membership. It informs members of the past and prospective activities, discusses views on various issues related to health and healing ministry. It speaks on behalf of CMAI to people who are interested and committed to promote holistic healing to all. The regular CMAI publications related in this period were:

Publication: Christian Medical Journal of India.
CMAI's official publication, which has a readership in India as well as abroad.
Released edition: No. 36.4
Theme: 46th Biennial Conference

Publication: Life for All
LFA is the quarterly newsletter of CMAI that knits our network together with news, reports from the field and important announcements.
Released edition: No. 201
Period: October-December 2021

Publication: Footsteps
This is brought out by Tearfund, London. CMAI prints both english and hindi language editions in India for local distribution.

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