

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE 'CORE GROUP ON MENTAL HEALTH OF CHILDREN' HELD ON 19TH MARCH, 2010 AT 1400 HOURS IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM, NCPCR, NEW DELHI

A Meeting of the 'Core Group on Mental Health of Children' (as constituted vide O.M. dated 11th March, 2010) was held in the Conference Room of NCPCR on 19th March, 2010 at 1400 hours.

2. The following were present:

- a) Ms. Poonam Natarajan, Chairperson, National Trust In Chair
- b) Ms. Sandhya Bajaj, Member, NCPCR
- c) Mr. B.K. Sahu, Registrar, NCPCR
- d) Dr. Sarita Sarangi, Member, DCPCR, New Delhi
- e) Dr. Achal Bhagat, Sarthak, N.Delhi
- f) Dr. Amit Sen, Sitaram Bhartiya Institute of Sc. & Research, N.Delhi
- g) Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, VIMHANS, New Delhi
- h) Mr. B.R. Singh, Social Welfare Dept., Govt. of NCT of Delhi
- i) Mr. D.P. Bhahal, Dept. of Social Welfare, Govt. of NCT of Delhi
- j) Ms. Suchi Sehgal, Dept. of WCD, Govt. of NCT of Delhi
- k) Ms. G. Shyamala, Aadi, New Delhi
- l) Ms. Sangeeta Khandelwal, Muskaan, New Delhi
- m) Mr. T.C. Nakh, Asha Kiran, New Delhi
- n) Dr. U.C. Bajpai, Consultant (NCPCR)
- o) Mr. Sanjay Tiwari, Consultant (NCPCR)

3. At the outset, Ms. Poonam Natarajan, Chairperson of the Core Group, welcomed all the participants to the Meeting and requested Mr. B.K. Sahu, Registrar, NCPCR to start the proceedings.

4. Mr. B.K. Sahu, Registrar, NCPCR informed that the Core Group formed by the Commission has a heart and mind on this very sensitive issue and is professionally competent from mental health aspects. Therefore, the Commission thought to get benefits from the expertise of the members of the Core Group. He added that this meeting has been called in continuation to the earlier meeting which was held at NCPCR Conference Room on 11th March, 2010.

5. Mr. Sahu further informed that a team consisting of Dr. Shantha Sinha, Chairperson (NCPCR); Ms. Sandhya Bajaj, Member (NCPCR); Mr. M.M. Vidhyarthi, Member (DCPCR); Ms. Sangeeta Dhingra Sehgal, Representative of Principal District Judge, Tis Hazari; Mr. Harsh Mander, Director (Aman Biradari); Director, WCD (Govt. of NCT of Delhi); and Mr. Sanjay Kumar Tiwari, Consultant (NCPCR) visited Asha Kiran Complex, Avantika Delhi on 30th December, 2009 in the presence of the Home Superintendent,

Welfare Officer and Doctor of the concerned Home. He informed that a copy each of the Monitoring Report of the Team on the 'Functioning of the Govt. run Home for Mentally Retarded persons (including children) in Asha Kiran Complex' was made available to all the Members of the Core Group in the meeting held on 11th March, 2010. A copy of the said Report was also made available to all those members who could not attend the meeting on 11th March, 2010. He further added that another team comprising of Mr. Shashank Shekhar, Member (DCPCR) and Mr. D. Yadav, MSSO, AIIMS also visited Asha Kiran Complex on 1st February, 2010 and provided a copy of the Report of the said visit as well to the members of the Core Group.

6. Ms. Poonam Natarajan, Chairperson of the Core Group, urged the Group to give concrete recommendations which could be compiled and submitted to the Hon'ble Court in respect to the Case which is scheduled to come up for hearing on 28th April, 2010.
7. Dr. Sarita Sarangi, Member (DCPCR) suggested that need assessment of all the inmates in the Home should be carried out and on the basis of their mental, rehabilitation and other cognitive needs they should be segregated and provided separate enclosures in order to give them specific individual need-based care and attention.
8. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal opined that a comprehensive need assessment of all the individuals in the Home should be undertaken on priority basis and further proposed for:
 - A comprehensive health care facility with effective ESOPs (Emergency Standard Operative Procedures) to minimize mortality and promote a healthy environment for living, learning and caring;
 - A structured and methodical overview of the psychological needs and well being of all the individuals;
 - Conducting an evaluation of the cognitive needs to help in categorizing the structure of support system for each;
 - Assessing the individual's adjustment in the psychological and physical environment to plan social reintegration in a cascade manner; and
 - Personalizing and Customizing the vocational inputs and recommendations thereof.
9. Dr. Achal Bhagat, while not favouring the segregation of inmates, opined that there was a need to look at the problem in a holistic manner. He informed that there were about 750 people living in Asha Kiran in a space designed for about 300 people and every year about 200-300 new residents join the Homes. He further added that there were reports of abuse, neglect and maltreatment at Asha Kiran in the last year and that no process of rehabilitation was prevailing in the Home. He proposed the closure of

Asha Kiran for new admissions and make alternative arrangements for abandoned people with disability in smaller NGO run homes or other community alternatives.

10. Ms. Poonam Natarajan felt that segregation of inmates on the basis of age, rather than on the basis of individual needs, would be more appropriate. She felt that there was a strong need to undertake an Awareness Campaign.
11. Dr. Amit Sen laid stress on the in-house training of the staff and care-givers at the Asha Kiran Complex
12. Mr. B.R. Singh, Joint Director, Social Welfare Dept., Govt. of NCT of Delhi, informed that the proposal for the segregation of inmates has not yet come up in their scheme of things. However, he added that on the directions of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, a team comprising of Dr. A.K. Walia, Hon'ble Minister for Finance; Shri Mangat Ram Singhal, Hon'ble Minister for Social Welfare; Secretary (Social Welfare); Director (Social Welfare); and Dr. Desai, Director (IHBAS) visited Asha Kiran Complex to look into the reasons behind the large number of deaths and to suggest remedial measures. He added that after detailed field inspection and interaction with the inmates, officials, Doctors and IHBAS team of experts, the Committee made several recommendations, some of which are:
 - An Administrator should be appointed immediately on contractual basis to exclusively look after the entire management of the Asha Kiran Complex. He should be given full financial powers of HOD to incur expenditure, whenever necessary and a contingency amount of Rs. One lakh should be placed with him for meeting any emergency.
 - Contractual appointment of about 100 nurses to take care of inmates as well as hiring 240 Ayas/House Aunties.
 - Hiring of 8 Doctors (4 Pediatricians and 4 Physicians) on contract basis.
 - Creating a Special Ward in Ambedkar Hospital exclusively for keeping and treating serious patients of Asha Kiran.
 - Increasing the number of Safai-Karamcharis to at least 60 who will be on round-the-clock duty.
 - Procurement of two ambulances for the Asha Kiran Complex.
 - Installation of CCTV Cameras in each room/cottage and dormitory with control room in the Front Office.

- The IHBAS team of Doctors should continue medical examination of each inmate as a special drive and should keep personal medical record of each inmate.
- The Asha Kiran Complex, which has 738 inmates against the capacity of 350, needs to be decongested immediately. The existing empty buildings at Bindapur, Dwarka, Nehru Vihar and Narela should be handed over to NGOs within two months to take care of inmates to be segregated and shifted from Asha Kiran.

13. Based on the deliberations/discussions in the meeting, Ms. Poonam Natarajan requested all the members of the Core Group to submit their concrete recommendations (both short term and long term) through e.mail to her and/or to the Registrar, NCPCR by 9th April, 2010.

She advised to hold the next meeting of the Core Group on 21st April, 2010 at 1500 hours to discuss the recommendations proposed to be submitted by the members of the Core Group by 9th April, 2010.

14. Ms. Poonam Natarajan thanked all the members for their participation and requested for their presence in the next meeting on 21st April, 2010 in the Conference Room of the NCPCR.