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CANCER SCREENING STUDY FOR ENHANCING EARLY DETECTION AND CANCER CARE: A COMMUNITY MODEL

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ABSTRACT

Rural communities frequently face obstacles to prompt diagnosis and treatment of diseases like cancer. In today's scenario cancer is one of the world's top causes of illness and mortality. In order to increase access to community based cancer screening, raise awareness, and guarantee early treatment of detected cases, the "Cancer Screening Study "was carried out in Rahuri Block of Ahilyanagar District, Maharashtra, India. The project successfully screened 5,475 people, reaching 109.50% of the intended target of 5,000 beneficiaries spread over ten chosen villages. 32 individuals who tested positive for cancer were found by thorough screening, and they all received successful surgical management. The program demonstrated the efficacy of structured community based cancer screening programs in rural areas by greatly increasing community knowledge of cancer prevention, facilitating early detection, and improving access to high-quality surgical care.

KEYWORDS: *Community Screening, Public Health, Cancer,* Diagnosis.

INTRODUCTION

In India, cancer is a significant public health issue that has a high health burden, especially in rural areas with inadequate access to specialized oncology facilities and preventive healthcare services. Advanced-stage disease is frequently the result of delayed diagnosis, which lowers treatment efficacy and raises mortality. One of the best methods for detecting malignancies at an earlier, more curable stage is population-based screening programs. Considering this present study involve extensive cancer screening program in Ahilyanagar District's, Rahuri Block, Maharashtra, India. The project's main objectives were to raise public awareness of common malignancies, carry out systematic community screenings, support early diagnosis, and guarantee that patients who were detected received timely referrals and treatment. By integrating community mobilization with accessible healthcare services, the project sought to reduce delays in diagnosis and improve treatment outcomes among rural populations.

Methodological Implementations

The project's main goals were as follows.

- To offer community based cancer screening programs in rural areas.
- To raise awareness of common malignancies' early warning signs, symptoms, and risk factors.
- To enable early diagnosis by means of methodical screening.
- To enable timely referral and surgical care of confirmed cancer cases.
- To improve access of quality cancer care for rural communities.

This Cancer Screening Study was conducted by "Saidham Foundation" in ten chosen villages of Rahuri Block, Ahilyanagar District, Maharshtra, India. Eligible

recipients were invited to attend screening camps through extensive community awareness campaigns. Standardized methods were used by qualified medical personnel to screen for cancer, and suspected cases were referred for further testing. At Saidham Hospital, patients with confirmed cancer received the proper surgical care, guaranteeing continuity of care from screening to treatment.

OBSERVATIONS/OUTCOMES

The project demonstrated exceptional performance by surpassing its planned target as depicted in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Project Targets and Performance.

Parameter	Planned Target	Achieved	Performance
Beneficiaries screened	5,000	5,475	**109.50%**
Villages covered	10	10	100%
Cancer-positive cases identified	32		
Beneficiaries undergoing surgery	32	32	100%

The project exceeded its screening target by 475 additional beneficiaries, reflecting excellent community participation and effective implementation strategies.

✓ Clinical Outcomes

The screening program successfully identified 32 cancer positive beneficiaries requiring definitive management. Crucially, all identified patients received successful surgical care at Saidham Hospital, guaranteeing full treatment linkage and overcoming treatment delays. This achievement reflects; effective screening and referral processes; excellent patient follow-up, effective communication between tertiary care services and field teams and improved accessibility of skilled surgical oncology services.

✓ Community Impact

By combining awareness with easily available screening and treatment facilities, the project produced significant public health benefits for rural populations. The main outcomes were as follows.

- A higher screening coverage than anticipated.
- Early detection of cancer in both symptomatic and asymptomatic people.
- All patients with a diagnosis receive prompt surgical intervention.
- Greater understanding of early detection and cancer prevention.
- Increased community involvement in healthcare prevention.

✓ Public Health Significance

Structured, community focused screening programs can significantly enhance cancer detection and treatment outcomes in remote areas. Early detection increases quality of life, lowers treatment costs and improves survival by allowing intervention before the disease progresses. In order to guarantee that no diagnosed patient went untreated, the project also created an efficient referral chain that linked community screening services with professional hospital care.

The initiative illustrates the success of combining community awareness, systematic screening, referral services and hospital based treatment into a unified continuum of cancer care. Strong community acceptability and effective mobilization efforts are demonstrated by reaching more than 109% of the intended screening target. In rural areas, where delayed diagnosis is still a major problem, such integrated community screening programs are especially beneficial. Future public health initiatives aiming at lowering the burden of cancer by early detection and prompt treatment can use the study as a scalable paradigm.

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CONCLUSION

By screening 5,475 beneficiaries, or 109.50% of the target this project effectively met and exceeded its stated goals. The program, which was carried out in ten villages in Rahuri Block, Ahilyanagar District, Maharashtra, India found 32 individuals who tested positive for cancer. All of them received successful surgery at Saidham Hospital, Ahilyanagar District, Maharashtra, India. The initiative greatly increased community involvement, raised awareness of preventative healthcare, improved early cancer detection, and guaranteed prompt access to high-quality surgical care. Its successful execution offers a reproducible blueprint for growing rural cancer control initiatives in comparable situations and shows how well coordinated community-based cancer screening programs can improve cancer outcomes.

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