

## **Institutional Best Practices 2017-18**

### **Title -Palliative Care Program- The Flagship Program of National Service Scheme**

#### **Objectives-**

- As an educational institution it is our responsibility to continue to reach out to the needs of the local population. The growing instances of cancer in society, the pain and suffering of the patients continue to concern us.
- To create among youth a sense of social responsibility and increase their feelings of self-worth.
- It acts as an effective check against youth falling into bad habits, especially by understanding the link of the causes of cancer to addictions of various kinds.
- To sensitize young minds to become more caring, humane and build the overall personality of the students.

#### **The Context –**

- The National Service Scheme Units of this college have been engaged in a wide variety of outreach and extension activities, working in tandem with several governmental and non-governmental agencies over a period of time for the benefit of the local population.
- It was found that cases of cancer are on the rise generally in Kerala, and the same could be said to be true for Pallipuram Panchayath.
- There are many houses where there are the aged and the ill, with no proper nursing care available for them, who are dependent on the Panchayath Health Services. This is especially true for those who are bedridden and could only be helped through house visits of medical staff at regular intervals.
- In this context, it was decided to go in for a sustained Palliative Care Program where the students would accompany the Panchayath Medical staff on their house visits.

#### **The Practice-**

- To sensitize students to the special requirements of the Palliative Care Patients, the first step was a series of training sessions for the volunteer students by the government agencies, before beginning the Program.

- They were also trained on appropriate bedside manners and behavior with the patients and with the relatives of the patient.
- Every day, house visits are made by 2 students.
- The Palliative care vehicle of the Panchayath with a nurse and another staff would reach the college premises by 10 am and the students were picked up by them from the college.
- The students visit a few houses and are dropped back in the college before closing time by the vehicle.
- In the houses where the visits are made, the students learn by observation and practice the various skills required, including, sponging, making fresh beds, helping the patients to change into fresh clothes or to assist the nurse in simple first aid or health care.
- This Program contributes immensely towards building the life-skills of our students, through actual hands-on experiences that enrich their experience of college education. It contributes substantially to the goals of higher education, by creating socially responsible, confident youth who wish to give back.
- For Onam, our students gifted Onamkits comprising new clothes, groceries and household items to 40 households under Palliative Care.

#### Evidence of Success

- The Palliative Care Program of our college has been very well received by the society, the Panchayath, the students and the patient beneficiaries & their families.
- The students have become better volunteers and with a changed better perspective that lasted.
- Students have reported how patients waited to see them and talk to them; they have been touched with the love of the patients and their families. And they have been moved by the plight of these people.
- This program has become the most important, Flagship program of the NSS, creating a lasting and sustaining link between our college, the health officials and the local population, bringing a great degree of satisfaction to our all concerned. And has therefore been continued in this academic year as well with greater regularity.

#### Problems Encountered & Resources Required

- Palliative Care is in itself a very small step to alleviate the suffering of patients.

- Only government agencies and funding are inadequate to meet the requirements, there is the need for more NGOs and several like-minded people to support the cause.
- No doubt, this is a much needed program. Yet, there is a strong feeling that the thrust has to be on reducing the instances of illnesses with a greater focus on keeping the population in good health.
- To this end, a detailed study of the health habits of the population needs to be undertaken along with some professional external help, in identifying the key triggers that cause this illness in our area, and in finding and implementing solutions to prevent further instances of this disease.
- The semester system of academics, the frequent university exams, with continuous internal evaluation reduces the time available for students to devote for Palliative Care.

Title- Taking 'English' to School- Our students teach the students of Velliyakulam Government U.P. School, Cherthala

Objectives

- Since a working knowledge of the English language is inevitable in today's times, for good placements or to achieve the objectives of higher education, this program intends to 'catch them young'- i.e. to create greater English fluency among greater numbers at a younger age.
- To give back to the society through a meaningful interaction with the neighbourhood school.
- To develop among our students – self- worth, confidence, delivery skills, their love for and knowledge of- their chosen subject of learning.
- To create respect for and awareness of -the efforts required for teaching. To improve the teacher-student relations in the college.

The Context-

- Situated as we are in a remote, rural and backward area, lack of fluency in English language is a huge impediment, adversely affecting the career prospects of our students.

- It has been found that many students perform poorly in English language exams. They have fear and aversion to the study of English as a subject and as a medium of communication.
- Attempts to redress this situation at the college level is found to be very strenuous for both the teacher and the taught. So it was felt necessary to offer some constructive intervention in the earlier stages of education.
- The effort to teach is undoubtedly the best way to learn. When students are expected to teach someone else, they are motivated to excel, and this in turn nourishes their own capabilities, and sharpens the depth of their own understanding of the subject matter.

### The Practice-

- Velliyakulam Government U.P. School, Cherthala, was chosen for the implementation of this program. This school has students from Classes 1 to 4.
- Once a month a small group of 7 final year students of our college, doing the BA English Degree program, visit the school to engage classes in English language for the students of the school. Our students are chosen randomly, ensuring that everyone gets fair opportunities.
- These classes include stories and conversations to improve the reading and speaking skills of the school students.
- School students enjoy the classes as these are different in their approach and not taught by their familiar teachers.
- This day is celebrated as “English Day” by the school.
- The students of the school look forward to this monthly celebration which is highly cherished by our students as well.
- Our students have so far donated 35 books to the school library
- It is undoubtedly a great way of giving back to the society and of being useful to the local communities, which is an important goal of higher education.
- Moreover, over a period of time, this program can bring better quality students to higher education. This can aid in overall improvement in the standards of excellence of education in Cherthala area, in both college and school, and help overcome its backwardness to some degree.

### Evidence of Success-

- This program has met with substantial success and so it has been decided to continue the same into the future years.
- The BA English Degree final year students have shown a marked improvement in their overall academic interest, commitment to studies and respect towards the teachers. It has enhanced manifold the teacher-student relation in the department.
- Our students have shown greater confidence in their ability to communicate freely in English language. These results have surpassed the results of all traditional methods used in the past to motivate them for the same.
- The school authorities have expressed gratitude for our efforts and are keen to continue the program with us.
- School students are showing a gradual improvement in their proficiency in the use of English language.

### Problems Encountered and Resources Required-

- The hectic academic calendar of semester system creates pressure for time on students and teachers, thereby creating challenges in the program.
- The effort is like a drop in the ocean. A lot more needs to be done in this direction with greater intensity and frequency, for tangible results to be visible in a short span of time.
- The vision of an empowered student community who are proficient in the use of the English language can be achieved only if several other agencies and institutions take up the cause.