

Title of the Practice ***Palliative Care Program by Our Students***

Objective

- Cancer has become more widespread. This is a reality one cannot shy away from. Also, several people suffer from chronic illnesses, infirmities brought about by aging. In the absence of joint/extended families, taking care of chronic patients is a big challenge. This has to be undoubtedly a part of social responsibility. An educational institution, in a remote, rural place like ours is embedded in the social fabric of Pallipuram, our adopted village. That we are committed to reaching out to our neighbourhood, goes without saying.
- Palliative Care has become a part of our college ethos. It is our way of ensuring that our students develop empathy, learn the importance of being caring and doing selfless service
- It gives students the opportunity to learn the contradictions & struggles in life, centres them and makes them mature.
- We extend a much needed helping hand to the Pallipuram Panchayath Health Services.

The context –

- The students of our college under the leadership of National Service Scheme volunteers have been in the forefront of Palliative Care for several years now.
- That such services are much in demand is a testimony to the trying times we live in. Our services have been valued and appreciated by the health care staff, the patients & their families, propelling us to continue.
- In every society, the youth must be aware of its responsibility to the old, the healthy to the ill. As we go from integration to fragmentation in our households, there is an urgent need to step in and, offer hope & support. That is the essence of our program and its challenge as well.
- The house visits of our team with the medical staff to the houses of the patients are sometimes the only solace for many patients. So we have decided to offer our continued support.

The practice-

- Training our new volunteers for Palliative Care is the first step of our program, as usual. Palliative Care Program of our students is given due merit and recognition by the college, with the result that several new volunteers join each year.
- The students are then grouped, where 2 or 3 students, i.e. one senior student and 1 or 2 students from the juniors, take turns to make regular house visits along with the Palliative Care Staff of Pallipuram Panchayath, in their vehicle meant for the same.
- Several house visits were made this year too, in spite of the severe constraints of the pandemic situation, showing the grit and commitment of our students. In the houses where the visits are made, the students are part of the team to nurse the patient, including, sponging, making fresh beds, checking BP, administering medicines, helping the patients to change into fresh clothes etc.
- Our students conducted a **FLASH MOB** at Bus Stand on 8/3/2021 towards raising funds for liver transplant surgery for a patient.
- Our students also enthusiastically cleaned the Primary Health Centre, and helped to sort and stack medicines & files, make cotton bandages, clean equipments etc.

- In our program **Cancer Rogikalkk Oru Kaithang** (Extending A Hand for Cancer Patients), volunteers donated five rupees every Friday towards providing medicines for deserving Palliative Care patients.

Evidence of success

As always the Palliative Care Program of our college has been found beneficial by all the stakeholders- the Panchayat Health Services, the patients, their families and the students themselves.

It has been ongoing for several years now.

Our youth are more positive and confident in life, becoming good leaders.

Volunteering as a value to be inculcated in life, is practiced by many of our students. This continues to inspire many new students who join the program regularly. This is the biggest proof of the success of our program.

Most ex-student volunteers mention how the richness & depth of this experience has stood them in good stead in their lives & careers, even after their graduation.

Problems & limitations-

Our greatest challenge this year was the Pandemic situation and all the challenges that came with it. The regular functioning of our college was very badly affected, just as it has happened everywhere.

To add to this was the academic calendar including online classes, examinations and very irregular schedules.

However, kudos to the cheerful, enthusiastic, brave spirit of our young students, who simply looked beyond their own trials and tribulations, to be useful to others and care for them.

Title of the Practice

VIDYANIDHI - Student Support Programme

Objective

- To create a support system for our students drawn from the student and teacher community of the college.
- To nurture the value of volunteerism. This is much needed in today's society. In the absence of traditional support systems, the college has felt the need to inculcate the practice of volunteerism among its students. This practice will go a long way in curing several ails of the society, bringing happiness for the receiver and meaningfulness for the giver.
- To create a fund generated through donations by students and teachers as an emergency fund for students in need

The context –

- We have found that financial problems obstruct college education of many students, coming as they do from poor socio- economic backgrounds. Due to such challenges, they are unable study well. VIDYANIDHI is an effort to support students, for them to be able to continue their college education meaningfully, to reach out to students in crisis and provide some financial relief in deserving cases.
- It also gives students who are in difficulty, some mental strength, through support from their college.

The practice-

- Started in November 2019, this initiative titled VIDYANIDHI, a student support programme to mobilize an emergency fund to meet any urgent requirements of students, has evolved to become one of our best practices.
- Teachers and students continued to support this initiative.
- Through VIDYANIDHI, this year, our college has extended financial assistance to a BSc Chemistry student suffering from tumour.
- We could also provide an android phone to a student of BSc Zoology for attending online classes.
- We also provided the required semester exam fees for a deserving BCom student.

Evidence of success

- The very fact that we have been able to continue with VIDYANIDHI, speaks for its success. In spite of the pandemic situation, it has been well supported by both teachers and students
- Students continued to benefit from the program.

Problems & limitations-

- The irregular academic schedule and the absence of regular classes, brought on by the pandemic were the greatest hurdles in the practice of this program.
 - The economic hardships brought by the pandemic situation created constraints in the contributions of students towards this fund. However, even in tough times, the spirit of volunteerism has been kept alive by this program.
-