

A close-up, low-angle photograph of five young women of South Asian descent, smiling warmly at the camera. They are dressed in traditional Indian clothing, including colorful saris and blouses. The woman on the far left wears a blue and green sari with a red border. The woman next to her wears a blue sari with a white pattern. The woman in the center wears a black sari with a red and green patterned border. The woman to her right wears a yellow sari with a gold border. The woman on the far right wears a red sari with a gold border. They are all smiling and looking directly at the camera, creating a sense of community and positivity.

Revolutionizing Healthcare in Patna's Underserved Settlements

शहरी प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केन्द्र

गर्दनीबाग, 6C, अस्पताल, पटना

समय:- प्रातः 9 से संध्या 5 बजे तक

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आपकी सहायता के लिए हमारे पास

जिला स्वास्थ्य समिति, पटना

राष्ट्रीय शहरी स्वास्थ्य मिशन
(NATIONAL URBAN HEALTH MISSION - NUHM)
शहरी प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केन्द्र
(URBAN PRIMARY HEALTH CENTRE - UPHC)

बिहार स्वास्थ्य मिशन, पटना

1. चिकित्सक कक्षा
2. अलार्म रूम
3. मिनिमल टिकाकरण कक्षा
4. टीका कक्षा
5. एड्स रोग कक्षा
6. टीका वितरण कक्षा
7. एड्स रोग कक्षा
8. टीका वितरण कक्षा
9. टीका वितरण कक्षा



In the heart of India's bustling urban landscape – Patna (Bihar), where the rhythm of progress harmonizes with the struggle of marginalized communities, a beacon of hope has emerged. As urbanization accelerates, cities are grappling with a surge in challenges, particularly in the realm of healthcare. Among the shadows of the urban infrastructure, a dedicated group of healthcare professionals and community leaders are rewriting the narrative, one story at a time.

Meet Dr. Sneha, a seasoned healthcare professional with a heart dedicated to change. Having served tirelessly in rural areas across Jharkhand and Bihar, Dr. Sneha's journey took a new turn when she assumed the role of Medical Officer at the Urban Public Health Center (UPHC) in Patna, Bihar. This UPHC, nestled beside a marginalized settlement of 10,000 people in Gardhanibagh, was a symbol of neglect, its crumbling walls reflecting the healthcare disparities faced by the urban poor.



Driven by her passion and unwavering commitment, Dr. Sneha embarked on a mission to transform the UPHC into a sanctuary of health and well-being. With the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Patna Municipal Corporation (PMC), and the Diksha Foundation, the UPHC's metamorphosis began. Basic amenities like women's washrooms and essential medicines found their place, alongside an unexpected addition – a yoga center.

The UPHC wasn't just a building; it was a lifeline for the underserved settlements surrounding it. Dr. Sneha understood that to truly impact the community, a holistic approach was essential. Thus, the UPHC evolved into more than a health facility; it became a hub for preventive care, education, and empowerment. The idea was simple yet powerful – bring healthcare to the people, right where they live.

Central to this transformation were the Mahila Aarogya Samiti members – local women who became agents of change within their communities. Empowered and equipped with information, they took on the responsibility of disseminating critical health information, addressing issues ranging from family planning and contraception to social evils such as child marriage and gender-based violence. Their monthly sessions became a gathering of empowerment, a sisterhood dedicated to improving their lives and those around them.



I used to have a limited understanding of contraceptives, including the various options available. These meetings have truly enlightened me about sexual and reproductive health, emphasizing the significance of self-care and addressing one's own health needs. As a Mahila Aarogya Samiti member, I stand as an advocate in my community, empowering women to prioritize their well-being and make informed choices regarding the contraceptive method that aligns best with their individual situations.

- shared Meena Devi.



The results were remarkable. Driven by awareness and knowledge, home births dwindled, and families embraced smaller sizes, thanks to family planning initiatives. Antenatal visits became a norm, reinforcing the importance of maternal health. However, there was a challenge that revealed the depth of societal norms – adolescent sexual health.

In a society where taboos lingered and stereotypes thrived, reaching young people with accurate information became a delicate task. The proximity of the UPHC posed a paradox – while it ensured accessibility, it also fueled fears of stigmatization. Young individuals, striving for privacy, often chose private clinics over the UPHC, perpetuating a cycle of secrecy. Yet, even in the face of these challenges, progress is palpable.

Empowered Youth Pave the Path for Change in Urban Communities

A group of young leaders are emerging as the champions of change, rewriting the narratives of menstruation, youth sexuality, and contraception.

Sanu, a spirited 22-year-old with dreams as big as the challenges he faces. Growing up in the shadows of Patna's towering buildings in the underserved settlement of Adalatganj, he witnessed how societal norms cast a veil of silence around topics considered taboo. But Sanu refused to let silence be the story of his community. Armed with determination and a desire to bring about change, he joined a group of youth leaders working at the grassroots level through various foundations.

These young leaders, like Sanu, are the architects of a new movement – a movement that believes in the power of conversation to dismantle long-standing taboos. Through open dialogues and community engagement, they are tackling issues that have been whispered about for generations. Menstruation, youth sexuality, and contraception are no longer confined to the shadows; they are stepping into the light of day.

In the narrow alleys and humble homes of the settlement, these leaders gather fellow young minds, eager to learn and challenge the status quo. They host workshops and discussions, offering a safe space where questions are met with answers and curiosity is met with empathy.



For Sanu and his peers, this isn't just a mission; it's personal. They've seen the consequences of misinformation and stigma, and they're determined to change the course for themselves and the generations that follow.

With each step they take, they're shattering stereotypes. The whispered myths around menstruation are being replaced by facts, and the clouds of secrecy around youth sexuality are parting to reveal conversations of consent and understanding. As for contraception, it's no longer a topic to be skirted around; it's a choice that young individuals are learning to make for themselves. Sanu's eyes sparkle with pride as he recounts stories of young girls in his community embracing their bodies and embracing conversations that were once considered off-limits. He speaks of young boys who are now allies in the journey, promoting respect and gender equality.

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The topic of menstruation was always shrouded in secrecy, and I felt hesitant to even mention it. Through these gatherings, I came to realize that menstruation is a natural bodily process, and maintaining menstrual hygiene is essential knowledge for girls. Nowadays, I've transitioned from using cloth to sanitary napkins, and what's truly remarkable is that so have my six older sisters.

- revealed Santoshi, a 14-year-old member of the community's youth group

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As the sun sets behind the cityscape, Sanu and his peers continue to sow the seeds of transformation. Their efforts may not make headlines, but they're creating ripples of change that extend far beyond the boundaries of their settlement. In their courage, determination, and unwavering commitment to truth, they are the embodiment of a new dawn – one that promises a brighter, more open-minded future for all.