

SAMARTH ANNUAL REPORT

2013-2014

List of Members: 2013-2014

Governing Body

- Dr. Saradha Suresh : Honorary President, Former Director, Institute of Child Health (ICH), Chennai
- Dr. Rani Mohanraj : Secretary, Psychologist, Samarth, Chennai
- Dr. Shuba Kumar : Treasurer, Social Scientist, Samarth, Chennai
- Dr. L. Jeyaseelan : Prof. & Head, Department of Biostatistics, Christian Medical College, Vellore
- Dr. B.W.C. Sathiasekaran : Prof. of Community Medicine, Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute (SRMC&RI), Chennai
- Dr. R.Thara : Director, Schizophrenia Research Foundation, (SCARF), Chennai
- Dr. Lakshmi Vijayakumar : Psychiatrist, Founder Member Sneha Chennai
- Dr. Krishnakumar : Principal, Elite School of Optometry, Sankara Nethralaya, Chennai
- Dr. Suresh Kumar : Consultant Psychiatrist, Chennai

Advisory Body

- Dr. Lisa Manhart : Associate Professor, Epidemiology, Adjunct Associate Professor, Global Health, University of Washington Center for AIDS and STD, Seattle, USA
- Dr. Kumaraswami : Former Director, Tuberculosis Research Centre (TRC), Chennai
- Dr. Usha Ramakrishnan : Associate Professor, Hubert Department of Global Health, Emory University – USA

Members

- Ms.Rama Murali : Founder CARE³: Care. Connect. Community & Public Health Consultant
- Dr.Visalakshi Jeyaseelan : Lecturer, Department of Biostatistics, Christian Medical College, Vellore
- Dr. Keerthi Prabhu : Consultant Psychiatrist, Apollo Hospitals, Chennai

- Ms. Aarthi Kandasamy : Technical Assistant – CHARTED, Voluntary Health Services (VHS), Chennai
- Ms. K.V.Sripriya : Nutritionist, Research Coordinator, Samarth, Chennai
- Mr. Veerapandian : Assistant Professor, Madras School Of Social Work, Department of Counseling Psychology, Chennai
- Ms. Sylvia Jeyakumar : Biostatistical Consultant, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Chennai
- Ms. Basilea Watson : Technical Assistant (Research), National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT), Chennai
- Ms. Premalatha : Data Manager, Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF), Chennai
- Auditors** : Parameswaran & Associates Chartered Accountants.
- Bankers** : Canara Bank, St.Mary's Road, Chennai

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

My heartiest greetings to you all from Samarth. I am happy to share the previous year's activities and accomplishments of Samarth in this report. The year 2012-13 was another eventful year for Samarth. The sixth year saw some exciting projects, new collaborations and research publications. We were happy to collaborate with Emory University and Mohan's Diabetes Research Foundation on a project that sought to adapt the Team Care approach (developed in the US) towards treatment of depression in patients with diabetes. With diabetes becoming a public health burden in India the need to consider its long term impact on mental health is extremely important. Therefore, the results of this ongoing randomized control trial which aims to test the effectiveness of the Team Care approach in reducing depression among patients with diabetes will have important implications and is something and we are looking forward to. Another ongoing study commissioned by UNICEF seeks to understand the utilization of family planning and contraceptive services for HIV positive women in three districts in Tamil Nadu. This study is special to us as maternal health and HIV are close to our heart. We also have submitted papers in peer reviewed journals from our completed studies and look forward to the results of the review board.

I am also very happy to share the news that two of Samarth's members were invited to the University of Washington, USA to serve as consultants on a study that sought to adapt a set of HIV counselling modules (developed earlier for use by counsellors working with HIV+ patients in Chennai) for use among Afro-American patients with HIV. Samarth's members were part of the group who developed the modules in India. I am also very happy to report that our Social Sciences workshops on Qualitative Research and Questionnaire Development are gaining in popularity. We have now decided to hold these workshops in Chennai in collaboration with the Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF). The first workshop held in Nov 2013 was a huge success with close to 38 persons who registered for the 5 day workshop. I am thankful to all our members, collaborators, and well wishers for their continued support in our growth.

ABOUT SAMARTH

We are a group of epidemiologists, social scientists, psychologists and biostatisticians who share a common vision in advocating for health research. We have extensive research experience in using both qualitative and quantitative methods in several national and international multicentric health projects. These have ranged from projects on domestic violence, adolescent mental health, community mental health to, care and support programmes for HIV positive persons.

Samarth was set up in January 2007 and registered as a society under the Tamilnadu Societies Registration Act, 1956 on 24th May 2007; Samarth has been involved in conducting various research projects and social science training programmes.

OUR OBJECTIVES

- Conducting research to inform policy
- Promoting healthy behaviour through counselling and community education
- Building capacity in epidemiology, social science and biostatistics
- Building partnerships with government and private sectors in health promotion

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Samarth is committed to creating healthier lives of communities through credible research and sustainable interventions

**SAMARTH RESEARCH AND TRAINING
ACTIVITIES**

RESEARCH

ONGOING PROJECTS

1) Assessment and Documentation of Access and Utilisation of Family Planning Services and Linkages with Prevention of Parent To Child Transmission (PPTCT) and Maternal and Child Health Care Services for Women and Couples Living with HIV in Select Districts in Tamil Nadu (Dec. 2013- Dec. 2014)

Samarth is being supported by UNICEF to conduct a study on “Assessment and Documentation of Access and Utilisation of Family Planning Services and Linkages with Prevention of Parent to Child Transmission (PPTCT) and Maternal and Child Health Care Services for Women and Couples Living with HIV in Select Districts in Tamil Nadu”. This study seeks to understand the access to and utilization of family planning services among both HIV positive and negative women in select districts in Tamil Nadu, namely Krishnagiri and Thirunelveli and Chennai city. The specific objectives of the assessment and documentation are to document the existing key linkages of Primary prevention HIV in women of childbearing age (with special emphasis on pregnant and breastfeeding women. II) Prevention of unintended pregnancies in women living with HIV (as part of rights-based sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of people living with HIV (PLHIV). III) Safer infant feeding. IV) Treatment of mothers and children detected positive with ART.) To understand the gaps and barriers to provide essential cross referral linkages by service providers from both NRHM/MCH care and HIV care and support services for linking couples and women to family planning services in select districts in Tamil Nadu.

The desk review has been completed and the report submitted to UNICEF. The training of the field team has also been completed. The process of obtaining permission from the TN government is underway. The different stakeholder interview guides, quantitative assessment tools and observation checklists are being developed. Two research assistants were recruited who underwent a three days training programme. They were given an orientation to the study objectives and methodology. They were trained on the methods of administering the quantitative questionnaire as well as on qualitative methods of semi-structured interviews. The actual data collection is expected to commence in May 2014 after all necessary approvals have been obtained.

Completed Projects

1) **Evaluation of Hep. B Programmes of Bristol Meyers Foundation (Jan. 2013 – March 2014)**

The Bristol-Meyers Squibb (BMS FOUNDATION) Foundation has undertaken several programmes to provide information and training about Hep.B, which includes capacity building for healthcare professionals and lay health workers on disease education and prevention. In addition, the Foundation strives to share best practices in the prevention and management of Hep. B and C and informs public health policy. Their four thrust areas are: Awareness, Education and Prevention programmes. These programmes aim to create awareness about Hep. B and C conduct education programmes about the disease and teach beneficiaries regarding methods of prevention. They also aim at early diagnosis and prevention of further spread of the disease. The BMS Foundation has been operating in India for some time now and have been working with several NGO partners in several states across India. These NGO partners for the last 5 years have been involved in carrying out education and awareness programmes aimed at communities, schools and colleges, running vaccination camps and training health care providers on various prevention and treatment aspects of Hepatitis B.

The evaluation was completed in all the sites. Complete site reports were prepared following which the findings were shared with each of our NGO partners. A meeting was organized in Chennai from 3rd – 4th March 2014 wherein representatives of each of the partner NGOs were invited to discuss the findings of the evaluation report before it was finalized. This gave the NGO partners an opportunity to provide their feedback on the report. Some of the key findings that emerged following the evaluation were the need to incorporate monitoring and evaluation indices in each programme by the NGO partners. This would enable mid course corrections as and when required and would ensure that the programme was moving in the right direction. While there had been fairly good participation by both schools and community in the awareness programmes organized by the NGO partners, the vaccination programmes were not all that effective with many not completing the required 3 doses. For care providers the need for continued medical education programmes hat would keep them updated on latest trends and treatment methods as stressed. Following this meeting the report was finalized and submitted to BMS as well as to each of the NGO partners. BMS has called for a partners meeting on April 24th – 25th at Delhi wherein each of the sites will be asked to present their future plans. Samarth has also been invited to make a presentation of the evaluation report.

2) Psychological Distress among Pregnant Women in South India: Towards Intervention Development (June 2012- Aug. 2013)

This was a Collaborative study between the University of Washington (UW), USA under the Global Centre for Integrated Health of Women, Adolescents and Children (WACH) programme, Samarth, Chennai, the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (IOG)- Madras Medical College, Chennai and the Department of Gynaecology at the Christian Medical College, Vellore. The study proposed to develop culturally appropriate interventions to be implemented within antenatal clinics to relieve psychological distress among pregnant women. Specifically the study aimed to, 1) Estimate prevalence of depressive and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms among pregnant women seeking antenatal care and examine the impact of these symptoms on birth outcomes 2) Conduct interviews with women seeking antenatal care, obstetrician/gynecologists, social workers and other mental health professionals, through which we will gather information on how to culturally adapt therapeutic techniques to reduce depression and PTSD symptoms in these women.

All data collection both qualitative and quantitative from Chennai and Vellore was completed. Data on 150 pregnant women (75 from each site) in the last trimester were collected from the two centres, namely, Christian Medical College, Vellore and the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Chennai. A total of 15 in depth interviews were completed i.e; 6 from Chennai and 9 interviews from Vellore. The results revealed that 28% of women reported any experience of psychological abuse, 24% reported any experience of physical abuse, 21% reported presence of noteworthy depression symptoms and 19% reported experience of noteworthy symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder. The noteworthy symptoms of depression and psychological abuse were statistically significantly correlated with pre-term birth. The data analyses has been completed and the study findings presented in a conference by the PI in USA. A paper had also been submitted to the British Journal of Psychiatry (BJP) and the result is awaited.

3) Amphetamine-type Stimulants in India: A Situation Assessment Study (March 2013 – Aug. 2013)

UNODC (United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime) supported the conduct of a research study to understand the nature and extent use of ATS (Amphetamine Type Stimulants) in India. In India, the prevalence of ATS is not known. Over the last few years, laboratories producing amphetamine-group substances have been unearthed by law enforcement agencies from several parts of the country. Considering the serious adverse consequences associated with the use of these drugs, UNODC contracted Samarth to undertake a small qualitative

study in a few cities in India to gain insights into the use of these drugs. The objectives of the study were to i) understand the range, pattern and frequency of ATS use among a sample of young persons ii) understand the various factors associated with the use of ATS and iii) explore the adverse consequences related to the use of ATS. The study was conducted in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, Chandigarh- Punjab, Kolkatta- West Bengal, Aizawl-Mizoram and Moreh- Manipur.

In most sites, namely, Imphal, Aizawl, Manipur and Chennai a total of 10 qualitative interviews with ATS users was completed. In Kolkatta only 7 could be completed owing to difficulty in obtaining consent to participate. In big cities sites like Chennai, Chandigarh and Kolkatta, ATS use usually followed a night of heavy drinking and use of other substances like grass/weed/pot etc. It was also used more for fun and to have good time. But in sites like Manipur and Mizoram its easy access and availability combined with the harsh life these participants were exposed to suggested that these drugs were used to enhance their work performance and partly to escape from the reality of their daily lives. In almost all cases- men and women alike- smoking cigarettes was their first exposure to the world of substance use which usually started during their early or middle adolescence. Once they got acquainted with drugs and experienced the “*high*” it gave them, they began to want it more and more. Most reported experimenting with these substances with their friends. Awareness of the harms caused by drugs presented a mixed picture with some perceiving it as being harmless while others had begun to realise the damage it had caused them after years of abuse. While reports of ATS making them feel energetic and happy were commonly reported some also spoke of feeling aggressive, irritable and abusive. ATS was also seen as enhancing sexual prowess and energy. This was particularly evident among the party going sect, some of whom specifically took the drug with the intention of having sex. This was not so evident among participants from the north east. While a few participants had attempted to get rid of the habit and had gone in for detoxification programmes, they invariably relapsed and seemed unable to sustain remaining clear of drugs. Poor access to treatment facilities was reported by a few particularly from the north eastern states. The final report was submitted to UNODC.

4) Collaborative care for Depression and Diabetes in India – Qualitative Study Protocol

A study titled, “Collaborative Care for Depression and Diabetes in India”, involving Emory University and the University of Washington in the USA and the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation in Chennai was approved for funding by the National Institute of Mental Health

(NIMH) USA. Samarth was one of the study partners engaged exclusively to carry out the qualitative interviews and focus groups discussions in Chennai site and oversee the training of the field teams in Delhi and Vishakapatnam. The analysis of the entire qualitative data from all 3 sites was also undertaken by Samarth. The analysis has been completed and the final report has been submitted. The findings that emerged will be used to inform the adaptation of the TEAM care programme which is an integrated model for diabetes and depression care. Some key findings that emerged were the need for more education programmes on both diabetes and depression with patients in order to enhance awareness and compliance with care. The need to family members more closely was also suggested.

RESEARCH PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE:

1) An Intervention to Prevent Suicides Among Srilankan Refugees: A Feasibility Study Supported by Sneha India & ADRA India & VHS

Samarth is being supported by Sneha India, the Voluntary Health Services and ADRA India to conduct a study to understand suicidal behavior and depression among Sri Lankan Tamil refugees living in various camps in Tamil Nadu state. These At present, there are 111 camps all around Tamil Nadu with a total refugee population of 67,165 as on November 2012. It is reported by the Q branch, surveillance system which monitors these camps that suicide and suicide attempts are high in these areas. Consequently, the department of rehabilitation at the state and the Q branch requested the NGOs which provide support to these refugees to plan for interventions to reduce suicidal behavior among the Sri Lankan refugees that's happening in these camps. The project proposal which is a Randomized Controlled Trial will seek to test the effectiveness of Brief Intervention Contact as an intervention strategy to reduce/prevent suicidal behavior.

PUBLICATIONS

1. Abhijit Nadkarni, Hamid Dabholkar, Jim McCambridge, Bhargav Bhat, **Shuba Kumar, Rani Mohanraj**, Pratima Murthy, Vikram Patel. The explanatory models and coping strategies for alcohol use disorders: An exploratory qualitative study from India. Asian Journal of Psychiatry. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ajp.2013.06.010>
2. Neil Krishan Aggarwal, Madhumitha Balaji, **Shuba Kumar, Rani Mohanraj**, Atif Rahman, HelenaVerdeli, Ricardo Araya, M.J.D.Jordans, Neerja Chowdhary and Vikram Patel. Using consumer perspectives to inform the cultural adaptation of psychological treatments for depression: A mixed methods study from South Asia. Journal of Affective Disorders 163 (2014) 88–101.
- 3 Lakshmi Vijayakumar, Lakshmanan Jeyaseelan, **Shuba Kumar, Rani Mohanraj**, Shanmugasundaram Devika and Sarojini Manikandan (2013) A central storage facility to reduce pesticide suicides- a feasibility study from India. BMC Public Health 13: 850. Doi: 10.1186/1471-2458-13-850.

SOCIAL SCIENCE TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Social Science training Programmes organized by Samarth and those for which Samarth faculty have been invited to as resource persons during the period 2013 – 2014 are listed below:

1. Qualitative Research Methods and Analysis and Instrument Development 13th – 15th May 2013. Conducted by Samarth at the Biostatistics Resource and Training Centre- CMC, Vellore
2. Workshop on Epidemiology and Social Science Research from **26th - 30th November** 2013. Organized by Samarth in Collaboration with the Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF) and conducted at the SCARF premises.
3. Training in qualitative research methods for the research team- as part of the NIMH- Diabetes-Depression study. 6th -7th January 2014 at MDRF, Chennai.

PROFILE OF **FOUNDER MEMBERS**

L. Jeyaseelan has a doctorate in Biostatistics and is currently the Professor at Department of Biostatistics at Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore. He was trained in Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of Newcastle, Australia under the INCLEN (International Clinical Epidemiology Network). He has established a Biostatistics Research and Training Centre (BRTC) and a Clinical Data Management Centre (CDMC) at CMC for high quality data analyses and management. In addition, to being the honorary president of Samarth he also provides his expertise as a Biostatistician for Samarth's research projects.

Shuba Kumar is a Social Scientist and holds a doctorate in Medical and Social Psychiatry. She received her training in Social Science and Epidemiology from the University of Newcastle, Australia under the INCLEN (International Clinical Epidemiology Network) programme. She has been a lead investigator on research projects on women's reproductive health, domestic violence, mental health and HIV care and support programmes. She is also the sitting member of ethical committees in institutions such as, the National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT), Madras Diabetes Research Foundation (MDRF), and the Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF)

Rani Mohanraj completed her doctorate in Psychology from the University of Madras and was trained under the Fogarty Fellowship Programme in Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of Washington, USA. She has been involved in research studies on mental health concerns, specifically depression in primary care and school mental health. She has also worked with HIV affected children and has consulted on the development of tools for counsellors in HIV care.

Saradha Suresh is the Former Director of the Institute of Child Health (ICH), Chennai. She underwent training in Clinical Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Health Economics at the University of Pennsylvania, USA under the INCLEN programme. She has been the lead researcher on several neonatal and child health projects. She serves as a technical consultant on the research projects undertaken by Samarth.

Veerapandian was trained in Psychology from the President College, Chennai and completed M.Phil from University of Madras. He is a visiting faculty in Psychology at various educational institutions

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

AUDIT REPORT

We have examined the balance sheet of **SAMARTH** as at **31.03.2014** and the Income and Expenditure account for the year ended on that date which are in agreement with the books of account maintained by the said Institution.

We have obtained all the information and explanations, which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purposes of the audit. In our opinion, proper books of account have been kept by the above named Institution so far as appears from our examination of the books.

In our opinion and to the best of our information, and according to information given to us, the said accounts give a true and fair view- (i) in the case of the balance sheet, of the state of affairs of the above named Institution as at 31.03.2014 and (ii) in the case of the Income and Expenditure Account, of the Excess of Expenditure over Income of its accounting year ending on 31.03.2014.

The prescribed particulars are annexed hereto.

Parameswaran & Associates

Chartered Accountants

Firm Regn. No 013255 S

Place : Chennai

Date : 30/09/2014

(V Parameswaran)

Partner

M.No :024939

Samarth

No. 13A (Old No. 11), 4th Cross Street, Indira Nagar, Adyar, Chennai - 600020

Income and Expenditure Account for the period ended 31.03.2014

Expenses	Amount	Income	Amount
To Salary		By Interest Received on	
To Office Maintenance	29,285	deposit	74,618
To SST Project Expenses	1,40,015	By Bank Interest	137,140
To Bank Charges	1,787	By Overheads Recovery	486,098
To Food expenses	2,617	By Share India Phml all	20,000
To Printing and Stationary	2,282	By SST Registration Fees	224,000
To Travelling Expenses	1,485	By Donation	40,000
To Electricity Charges	16,916	By Income from Project	29,266
To Miscellaneous Expenses	33,904		
To Professional Charges	25,472		
To Postage and Courier	1,416		
To Telephone Charges	23,433		
To Interest on TDS	11,327		
To Depreciation	94,805		
To Excess of Income over Expenditure	626,379		
	<u><u>1,011,122</u></u>		<u><u>1,011,122</u></u>

Vide Our Report of Even Date,
Parameswaran & Associates
Chartered Accountants
Firm regn. No 013255S

Place : Chennai
Date : 19/09/2013

V. Parameswaran
Partner
M.No:024939

Samarth			
No. 13A (Old No. 11), 4th Cross Street, Indira Nagar, Adyar, Chennai - 600020			
Income and Expenditure Account for the period ended 31.03.2014			
Capital Account	986,730	Fixed Asset	131,298
Sundry Creditor	145,003	Deposits	1,500
Project Balance- Unspent	1,048,081	Sundry Debtors	25,513
		Cash & Bank Balance	2,021,502
	2,179,814		2,179,814

Place : Chennai
Date :30/09/2014

Vide Our Report of Even Date,
Parameswaran & Associates
Chartered Accountants
Firm regn. No 013255S

(V Parameswaran)
Partner
Memb. No. 24939