

## Pioneering public health through - “Community Adoption Program for Postgraduates”

Badrinarayan Mishra<sup>1\*</sup> , Nidhi Sinha<sup>2</sup> , Bidushi Mishra<sup>3</sup> , Gitisha Mishra<sup>4</sup> 

Achieving the highest level of health is a fundamental human right, attainable through a multifaceted approach that includes the active engagement of professional manpower. Under the ‘Community Adoption Program for Postgraduates (CAPP),’ postgraduate students from the Department of Community Medicine at R. D. Gardi Medical College are assisting local communities in addressing their own health issues to achieve the Government of India’s vision of a “Healthy Village” via achievement of relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through this initiative, these students are also gaining valuable experience and skills necessary to become effective public health experts.

### Access this article online

#### Website:

www.cijmr.com

#### DOI:

10.58999/cijmr.v4i03.294

#### Keywords:

CAPP (Community Adoption Program for Postgraduates), Healthy Village, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### Introduction

Public health has been fundamental to human civilization since its beginning and continues to play a vital role in the health of populations today. This field is constantly evolving, from the quarantines introduced in the 14th century to the modern ‘One Health approach’.<sup>1,2</sup> The primary goal of public health is to engage with communities at local, national, and global levels to enhance health and living conditions. Achieving this requires ongoing and meaningful interaction with local populations.

Community engagement at various levels by different agencies is a routine and established practice. However, there are still areas that need improvement. At R. D. Gardi Medical College, we have identified one such opportunity and are actively working to capitalize on it.

The rationale behind this initiative lies in the vast potential medical colleges have to serve communities

through their active engagement, particularly by utilizing their postgraduate students in the Department of Community Medicine. As of March 31, 2025, India has 780 medical colleges offering 1,721 postgraduate (MD) seats in Community Medicine, along with over 1,000 admissions for MPH and DPH programs each year.<sup>3</sup> If each postgraduate student is assigned one village or urban slum for a three-year period to identify health-related issues and develop micro plans to address them, we could potentially impact over 25000 communities—a significant number!

This initiative is called the ‘Community Adoption Program for Postgraduates (CAPP)’. In this program, each postgraduate student from the Community Medicine department at R.D. Gardi Medical College is assigned one village/underprivileged community from our field practice area for a tenure of three years, commencing with the 2023-24 admission batch.

The CAPP aims to develop adopted communities in line with the “Healthy Village” concept promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO) since 1889, which has been embraced by member states.<sup>4</sup> The current relevance of this healthy village concept is reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the

<sup>1</sup>Professor and Head, Dept. of Community Medicine.R.D. Gardi Medical College, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, India.

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Dental Department, R D Gardi Medical College, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, India.

<sup>3</sup>Consultant Dentist, R D Gardi Medical College, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, India.

<sup>4</sup>Consultant CS and Cybersecurity, R D Gardi Medical College, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, India.

**Correspondence to:** Badrinarayan Mishra, Professor and Head, Dept. of Community Medicine.R.D. Gardi Medical College, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, India, E-mail: badrinmishra@gmail.com

Submitted: 14/11/2025 Revision: 27/11/2025

Accepted: 07/12/2025 Published: 20/12/2025

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

**How to cite this article:** Mishra B, Sinha N, Mishra B, Mishra G. Pioneering public health through - “Community Adoption Program for Postgraduates”. Central India Journal of Medical Research. 2025;4(3):45-46.

United Nations.<sup>5</sup> Specifically, the Indian Government has identified nine themes to achieve the 17 SDGs. Theme 2 is dedicated to 'Healthy Villages', relating directly and indirectly to several SDG goals: Goal 2 (Zero Hunger), Goal 3 (Good Health & Well-Being), Goal 4 (Quality Education), Goal 5 (Gender Equality), Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), and Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).<sup>6</sup>

During the first six months of the program, postgraduates interact with community leaders, conduct school and community health camps, and carry out needs assessments to identify issues and develop a micro-action plan for implementation. In the following period, these micro plans are executed with guidance and support from the Department and the institute, aiming for a 50 to 75% success rate. A six-monthly evaluation of activities is a part of the action plan, and candidates document their work as a 'Community Dissertation' at the end of their tenure. This concept has been showcased at national platforms with aplomb.<sup>7</sup>

So far, we have assigned nine villages to nine enrolled postgraduates—seven from the 2023-24 batch and two from the 2024-25 batch. The CAPP initiative has already begun to yield results. A community survey revealed the presence of dental fluorosis in school children and high fluoride levels in all usable water sources in one of the villages, and the findings have been shared with health authorities. The postgraduate handling this issue presented their observations at the national level, receiving acclaim.<sup>8</sup>

Additionally, we tested 24 samples of different drinking water sources in the seven villages assigned to the 2023-24 batch for various physical, chemical, and biological parameters, and found that all sources had significantly high ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) for chemical parameters for chloride, total hardness, TDS (Total Dissolved Solids), and alkalinity and for 24 samples tested for biological parameters, all demonstrated presence of fecal coliform, thereby rendering them unsuitable for drinking. We are actively collaborating with local community leaders and government authorities to address this critical issue. Our findings have also been presented at a national

conference, with a research paper detailing these observations accepted for publication.<sup>9</sup>

The nutritional evaluation of the school children recorded a highly significant distribution of undernutrition ( $p=0.00$ ) in all schools across all villages.<sup>10</sup>

Another issue identified is Open Field Defecation (OFD) in one of the villages, despite its certification as OFD-free. The families involved are being studied as community cases, and tailored action plans are being developed to address their specific circumstances.

We are also exploring important issues such as waste disposal, geriatric multimorbidity and polypharmacy, the impact of intra-arm variations in blood pressure on adult health, and mental health problems among adolescents. The results and reports will be shared in due course.

In conclusion, the CAPP activities can contribute to achieving the National Government's objective of ensuring the highest standard of health for all its citizens. Involvement of postgraduates from other departments can further strengthen and broaden its scope.

## References

1. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "quarantine". Encyclopedia Britannica, May 24, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/science/quarantine-preventive-medicine>. Accessed September 4 2025.
2. <https://www.who.int/groups/one-health-high-level-expert-panel>
3. <https://www.nmc.org.in>
4. WHO-EM/CEHA/ 71-E; REPORT ON THE CEHA FIRST REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON HEALTHY VILLAGES, ISFAHAN, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, 6 - 9 NOVEMBER 1995
5. Sustainable Development; <http://sdgs.un.org/goals>
6. Theme 2 - Healthy Village | Ministry of Panchayati Raj | India; <https://panchayat.gov.in/document/theme-2-healthy-village>.
7. Rathore S, Mishra BN, et al. 2024. Village Adoption Program for Postgraduates: Public Health and Beyond. In Editor(s) (Ed.), eSouvenir. IAPSMYLNC24.
8. Bahrani J, Mishra BN, et al. 2024. Dental Fluorosis: A Community-Clustered Case Series. In Editor(s) (Ed.), eSouvenir. IAPSMYLNC24.
9. Bhargava N, Mishra BN, et al. 2024. Water Quality Assessment of usable water sources in the 7 adopted villages under Village Adoption Programme for Postgraduates. In Editor(s) (Ed.), eSouvenir. IAPSMYLNC24.
10. Gound S, Mishra BN, et al. Assessment of the Nutritional Status of School Children from Adopted Villages in the Rural Field Practice Area of RD Gardi Medical College, Ujjain (M.P.). [In Editor(s) (Ed.), eSouvenir. IAPSMYLNC24.