

# **Commission for Health Care**

## **The Catholic Bishops Conference of India**

Goal: - Prevention of Covid-19 Spread and Early monitoring of in India

### **Organizational Background**

CBCI Office for Health Care was established in 1989 by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India to function as the coordinating body of all the health related organisations of the Church in India. This Office is the forum for discussing various vital issues of national importance related to health and for planning common action. The office is to inspire and guide all the health related organizations according to the spirit of the Catholic teaching, practice and tradition. The CBCI office for health envisages, for having received the mandate from Jesus Christ, the Divine Healer, to ensure life in its fullness, and inspired by his compassionate love, the Catholic Church in India envisages a healthy society where people, especially the poor and marginalised, attain and maintain holistic well-being and live in harmony with the Creator, with self, with one another and with the environment.

### **Problem Statement**

India has reported one of the highest numbers of covid positive infections, which is spread both in rural and urban areas of the country and the mortality rate is high. In the present scenario of the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of Covid-19 Corona virus we all are trying to do our best to be safe and to take care of our family members in whatever way possible. In parishes and villages attached to the parishes, we are not able to do anything for our people. Some of us are able to reach prepared food kits. But we know that there are many who are tested positive and not all are able to access to the health facilities. The rush in all the hospitals and the cost for treatment in the private hospitals are forcing people to take care at home with minimum medical support. Thanks be to God, not all the cases are fatal or serious and many are recovering with home care. Of course, there are some who die either because it is too late or because there are no beds or oxygen supply in the hospitals.

The data shown and presented in the media are an iceberg. The reality is scary. The availability of beds at hospitals are very minimum and the lives of patients are at risk due to unavailability of timely detection, medication and further support. The patients reach hospitals very late, and their lives become very critical. The government is trying to do the maximum but due to high number of cases and late detection of the virus, it becomes almost impossible for them to manage at this level.

Can we do something at the parish level, the smallest form of church, during this medical emergency? Can we help out in any way possible to save life of people who are affected with Covid-virus infections while they are taking care at home? In answer to these questions most of the priests in the parish will perhaps say, "What can we do at this medical emergency?" CBCI Office for Health Care with the initiative of our National Secretary, Fr. Julius Arakkal, CMI along with some regional secretaries for Health Care reflected and came with a concept and a practical plan; Identifying and solving the cases at family is the only solution to address this issue.

### **Planned Intervention**

CBCI Office for health care is planning to utilize its existing structures. The National Office, Regional offices, Diocesan Offices and Parish Health Units. We firmly believe that health is the concern of the parish. That means parish-based health care for everyone. Each parish will have a group of volunteers who will be trained by registered medical practitioners. These volunteers will select most needy 10 families with the recommendation of Parish Priest irrespective of religion. Each selected covid positive family will be given a medical kit which

consists of a Pulse Oximeter, Vaporizer and Digital Thermometer. A religious sister doctor or any other committed doctor will be arranged by the Diocesan Health unit along with a volunteer assigned, who will be receiving the daily updates on health status from all the patients. All the stakeholders will be given timely trainings for skill enhancements by experts. Daily monitoring of Oxygen levels, Pulse rate, and body temperatures will be monitored regularly by the parish priests over phone or by the team of volunteers who will be available with him. The patients will be given needed psycho-social and medical prescriptions if needed, over mobile phones by the Doctors and will be reached by the volunteer youth at regular intervals. The trained sister nurses available in the parishes will give additional continuous support to volunteers and the infected families. Once the family turns to be negative the kits could be sanitized and handed over to Parish priest for distributing among affected families.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>National Office</b>	Finding the Resources	Ongoing
	Procurements of Materials	As Per Need
	Ensuring Timely Delivery	Ongoing
	Coordinate with Regional Secretaries	Ongoing
	Training to Diocesan Health Secretaries (Volunteers)	As Per Need
	Accompaniment	Ongoing
	Impact Assessment	Ongoing
<b>Regional Office</b>	Identify the Most affected Dioceses	As Per Need
	Distribution of Medical Kit to Diocesan Secretaries	As Per Need
	Update and accompaniment with Diocesan Secretary	Weekly
<b>Diocesan Office</b>	Identify the most affected Parishes	As Per Need
	Distribution of medical kits to Parishes	As Per Need
	Identify the Sr Doctor / Committed Doctor	As Per Need
	Accompanying the Parish Priests	Bi-weekly
	Training the Parish Team of Volunteers	As Per Need
<b>Sr Doctor</b>	Direct the acute patients for medication & Hospitalisation	Daily
<b>Parish Priest</b>	Identify the most affected Families	As Per Need
	Collect the Documents – (Adhar Card for Documentation)	Beginning
	Monitoring the Covid Positive families	Bi-weekly
	Orient the volunteers and monitor their activities	Regular Intervals
<b>Sr Nurse</b>	Medical and Socio- Psycho support to Volunteers and families	Daily
<b>Volunteer</b>	Collect Daily health status from families	Daily
	Analyse the collected data and information	Daily
	Connect acute families with Nurse & Doctor for care	Daily
	Give support to families	Daily
	Report to parish priests	Daily

**Sustainability**

The Parish-based home care model could be further extended with the help of more recourses. What next is the question? CBCI Office for Health Care with the help of the team assisting the Secretary has managed to bargain with the supplier of the kits for a reasonable price of Rs.1200.00 The kits will be delivered in the diocese at the given address. Initial amount needed is mobilized from some generous people through me and we are trying to mobilize for more funds. Here, there is something the parish priest and parish community can do. To look for the local sponsors who can help in this important and easy way to help the families with Covid positive cases in the beginning stages. We can save life, save expenses, and relieve of the stress the situation for the family. Rs.1200 per kit is not a big amount and there will be people generous to help to provide one or two or three or four kits for the needy ones in the parish.

Fr Julius Arakal CMI  
CBCI Office for Health Care  
New Delhi.