



ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24



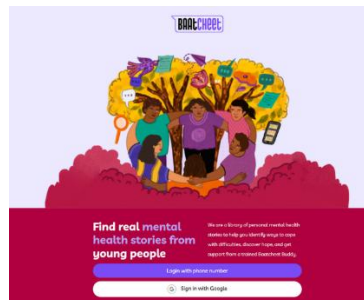
Project Name	Baatcheet
Project Duration	November 2022 - December 2024
Project PI/Lead	Dr Pattie Gonsalves
Project Location	Delhi, India

About the project

Baatcheet is a two-year research programme (2022-2024) designed to develop, pilot and evaluate a peer-supported web-based storytelling intervention intended to reduce anxiety, depression and social disability among youth aged 16-24 years. The key components of Baatcheet include a library of personal mental health stories from young people, reflective tools to encourage learning and application of coping strategies, and brief guidance from a peer supporter (who we call “Baatcheet Buddy”).

Key achievements/outputs

- Collaborated with five partner institutions, including two higher secondary schools, two universities, and one community-based organization (CBO) for the pilot study.
- Co-designed the intervention with 53 young people and mental health experts to define the intervention's features, content, and implementation strategies.
- Recruited, trained, and supervised 10 peer supporters ("Baatcheet Buddies") to promote the intervention and support participant engagement.
- Conducted awareness sessions and recruitment activities with 521 students across partner sites, resulting in 77 young people participating in the pilot study evaluation.
- Launched a "Call for Stories" campaign, collecting 15 new stories and producing 15 video stories, adding diverse and underrepresented voices to our mental health story library.
- Designed and launched an optimized version of the Baatcheet storytelling website.
- Captured insights and experiences from our Young People's Advisory Group (YPAG) members through a short video film.



Project Name	Outlive
Project Duration	2020 - 24
Project PI/Lead	Dr Pattie Gonsalves
Project Location	Delhi, Pune and Mumbai

About the project

Outlive is a suicide prevention programme jointly implemented by the Centre for Mental Health Law & Policy, Sangath, and Quicksand Design Studio and is supported by Comic Relief, UK. Outlive addresses urban youth suicide in India by engaging young people aged 18-24, in particular youth with

experiences related to suicide or self-harm, distress or mental health problems, and belonging to marginalized communities.

Outlive engages in diverse outreach efforts to connect with youth through the following activities:

- **Large hall sensitization sessions:** We reached 1553 youth through 20 sessions. These sessions featured multimedia presentations addressing self-care during mental distress & peer support during crises.
- **Interactive workshops:** We reached 1852 youth through 35 sessions. Workshops challenged myths, discussed risk factors, shared support avenues, & showcased Outlive films. Pre & post-surveys were used to understand changes in knowledge, attitude, literacy of suicide, & help-seeking behavior.
- **Community-based workshops:** We reached 940 youth through 28 suicide prevention workshops. These sessions aimed to foster help-seeking behavior & understanding of suicide.
- **The Facilitator Training Programme:** it aimed to equip 6 young adults with skills to lead Outlive awareness sessions within their colleges and youth communities and contribute to suicide prevention efforts.
- **Public events:** We organized public events, including a youth festival for World Suicide Prevention Day 2023, World Mental Health Day, film discussions, & dissemination of Outlive materials at youth conferences, reaching 1243 youth.
- **Stories of hope:** Publication of 26 lived experience stories to capture first experiences related to suicide prevention through blogs, poems, videos, artwork, and videos.
- Dissemination of suicide prevention resources on Instagram, reaching 22,48,733 impressions on the platform.
- Oral presentation, International Association of Suicide Prevention World Congress, Piran - September 2023: 'Outlive: Engaging and Enabling Youth to Address Suicide Prevention In India'.
- Poster presentation, International Conference on Mental Health-Children and Adolescents, New Delhi, May 2023: 'Outlive: Engaging and Enabling Youth to Address Suicide Prevention In India'.



get help now

Suicide can ~~never~~ be prevented

*with timely help
& support.*

Project Name	School Mental Health Promotion Program
Project Duration	3 Years
Project PI/Lead	Prachi Khandeparkar
Project Location	Pune, Maharashtra

About the project

The School Mental Health Promotion Program (SMHPP), is based on the WHO's framework of health-promoting schools. It aims to create an enabling environment within schools to promote health among all school community members, including students, teachers, staff, and parents. The program's goals are achieved through a combination of strategies delivered at three levels: Universal i.e. impacting the entire school community; Group or class level; and Individual. Our intervention theory is based on the premise that school climate is shaped by students' perceptions or experiences of the school's social environment, which encompasses safety (social, emotional, and physical), teaching and learning (academic climate), and relationships (community climate). All these factors are linked to effectively managing stress, which enhances mental well-being. These activities are adapted and tailored based on the needs of each specific school environment and its students. School management, teachers, and parents are the major stakeholders in implementing the program within their schools. The program is currently ongoing in 100+ schools (24-25 academic year)

Key achievements/outputs

- 90 government schools participated in the program for the academic years 2023-24.
- A total of 29000+ students (classes 5-12) covered through the program.
- The program sensitised close to 1200+ teaching and non-teaching staff members towards mental health and stigma.
- 39 School Health Facilitators (SHFs) deliver the intervention, and are supervised by 10 supervisors.
- 7900+ individual counseling sessions conducted by school health facilitators, comprising 2500+ cases and 5400+ follow-ups.
- Engagement of 6000+ parents through parent meetings and community sessions.
- Organised workshops for teachers and headmasters addressing discipline practices, laws related to children, mental health literacy and, stress management and self-care techniques to support their wellbeing and to provide referrals for counselling service.
- Organized quizzes and competitions based on monthly themes to promote the development of life skills, leadership and creativity.
- Conducted exhibitions in schools to showcase students' creative ideas on relevant topics promoting mental health awareness and combating stigma.
- Follow-ups by school health facilitators led to a 52% return rate for absent or dropout students.
- Intervention enhanced the passing percentage of students in all schools
- Program progress disseminated to headmasters, education department, and funders through annual orientation programs for effective interactions and feedback.
- SMHPP team showcased an interactive exhibition stall at the 'Jalosh Shikshanacha' event by the education department, Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC), Pune on 22-24 January 2024.

- Based on the success of our program, PL is supporting the dept of education, PCMC for running a pilot for recruitment, training, and supervision of 25 counselors appointed for 118 schools by PCMC Pune, Maharashtra.
- Our program appointed counsellors are co-opted as members on the school Sakhi-Savitri Committees as per directives of the Govt of Maharashtra to handle cases related to abuse and violence on students.
- SMHPP program is customized as per need of the schools and is constantly evolving.



Project Name	Enhancing Mental Wellbeing in 24 Ashramshalas in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra
Project Duration	30 Months
Project PI/Lead	Prachi Khandeparkar
Project Location	Gadchiroli, Maharashtra

About the project

The objectives of this project were to understand the mental health needs of the children in the Ashramshalas; develop an intervention promoting social, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing; and demonstrate the acceptability of the intervention content by key stakeholders and the feasibility of delivering the intervention through lay counsellors in the Ashramshalas. These activities are adapted and tailored based on the needs of each specific school environment and its students. The Tribal Development Department, HM and teachers are the major stakeholders in implementing the program within their schools. The program is acceptable and feasible to deliver in Ashramshalas. The program was running in 24 Ashramshalas.

Key achievements/outputs

- Implementation of the "Enhancing Mental Wellbeing" program in 24 Ashramshalas in Gadchiroli, Maharashtra, India from April 2023 to January 2024.
- Program delivered by 8 school health facilitators under the supervision of three supervisors.
- Total of 8400 students covered through the duration of the program.
- Awareness generation activities at the school level to promote health and mental well-being in the school community.
- 565 school staff (teaching and non-teaching) sensitized on mental health issues through monthly meetings and regular workshops.
- 1460+ counselling sessions attended by students, 520+ students utilizing counselling services and 950+ follow-up sessions provided for students.

- Monthly competitions and quizzes held with themed focused to improve life skills , enhanced their leadership skills and demonstrated their latent talents.
- Capacity-building workshops for male and female wardens of Ashramshalas to enhance their knowledge and skills and to provide referrals for counselling service.
- Addressed 12 Panchayat/Village Child Protection Committees to promote mental health and well-being initiatives.
- The program contributed to the development of a supportive environment for mental health within Ashramshalas and local communities.
- Collaborating with the Tribal Development Department and other funding agencies for ongoing support.
- Currently focusing on government engagement for program scalability.



Project Name	Nutritional, psychosocial, and environmental determinants of neurodevelopment and child mental health
Project Duration	Sep-2021 to Sep-2025
Project PI/Lead	Dr. Prashanth N Srinivas, Director, Institute of Public Health, Bengaluru
Project Location	Rewari, Haryana and Bangalore, Karnataka

About the project

The project aims to evaluate independent, cumulative and interaction effects of nutritional, psychosocial and environmental determinants of neurodevelopment and child mental health in diverse settings of North and South India, covering urban and rural locations, and to identify the processes by which these determinants are influenced by socio-economic disparities.

Key achievements:

- Sweep 1 data collection was completed by assessing 600 children at Rewari. These assessments included a parent-report questionnaire, child's anthropometric assessment, and activity booklets like ASER and RCPM for literacy, numeracy, and cognition assessment.
- Indoor air pollution assessment for summer and winter seasons (N=100) and biological samples (N=250) were collected from the sub-set of sweep 1 participants.
- 37 children were given a referral for RBSK and 32 children were given a referral for anthropometric measures (weight). The children were referred to the District Early Intervention Center (DEIC), Rewari.
- 5 children with Hb levels less than 10g/dl were referred.

- The pilot for Sweep 2 data collection is complete.
- Dr Smita Todkar registered her PhD with MAHE through COINCIDE, focusing on fathers' involvement in child development.



Project Name	COMPASS
Project Duration	April-2018 to December-2024
Project PI/Lead	Gauri Divan
Project Location	Delhi

About the project

COMPASS is the largest trial of its kind for autism in any low- and middle-income country setting and the results generated will help in extending and expanding the support for families of young children with autism across other low-resource settings in the region. The trial is complete and has recruited 261 families from 2 tertiary centers (All India Institute of Medical Sciences and Maulana Azad Medical College associated Lok Nayak Hospital) in the national capital, Delhi.

The project aims to evaluate the effectiveness and costs associated with delivering the Parent mediated Autism communication intervention for Non-SpecialistS Plus (PASS Plus). This was delivered by a group of trained non specialist health workers with support and supervision from specialists.

Key achievements / Outputs

- 843 intervention sessions delivered by March 2024, concluding the intervention delivery for all participants randomized into the intervention arm.
- 217 (83 %) end-line assessments completed.
- 222 (85%) follow-up assessments completed.
- Consent for longitudinal COMPASS follow-up from 222 participants (85%) obtained.
- Three coders trained to code the primary outcome measure which is a video-based assessment called the Brief Observation of Social Communication Change i.e., BOSCC, locally in India. 267 BOSCC videos (38%) coded.
- Three coders on a secondary video outcome measure i.e., Dyadic Communication Measure of Autism (DCMA), locally in India. 508 DCMA videos (73%) coded.



Project Name	Neurodevelopment and Autism in South Asia Treatment and Evidence (NAMASTE)
Project Duration	5 years (Sep-2022 to Sep-2027)
Project PI/Lead	Gauri Divan
Project Location	India (East District of Delhi and North District of Goa), Sri Lanka, & Nepal

About the project

NAMASTE is a community-based program which aims to design and implement detection care pathways for young children with neurodevelopmental disabilities in different health systems of South Asia. The program is being implemented in 4 sites i.e. India (Delhi and Goa), Sri Lanka and Nepal. Children identified with delays will be triaged into two types of community-based interventions- The Parent mediated Autism Social Communication Intervention for Non-Specialists Plus (PASS Plus) and World Health Organization Caregiver Skills Training (WHO CST) based on results on the detection measure which will be administered in the community. The strength of NAMASTE will be to adapt a broad detection care pathway design to 4 distinct contexts in South Asia based on health and care systems in each site, with the aim of evaluating a model for universal health coverage for young children with disabilities. The program is being conducted in collaboration with the University of Manchester, Autism Care Nepal Society, and the Sri Lanka College of Pediatricians.



Key achievements / Outputs

- MoU with Department of Women & Child Development established at both the sites in India
- MoU with Institute of Human Behaviour & allied Science (IHBAS), New Delhi established
- All evaluation and detection measures culturally adapted at India site
- 3 master trainers at India site trained on Social Attention and Communication Surveillance (SACS) measure and inter-rater reliability established
- WHO caregivers Skills Training (WHO CST)
- 4 India site team members achieved competency in WHO-CST training by Ummeed, Mumbai
- 1 India site team member established as a master trainer in WHO-CST by WHO consultant Erica Salamone
- Initiation of translating WHO-CST manuals in Hindi and Marathi
- Parent mediated Autism Social communication intervention for Non-Specialists (PASS Plus)
- Competency in PASS Plus delivery achieved by 2 master trainers each in Sri Lanka and Nepal
- Adaptation and translation guide for PASS Plus manual completed and shared with Nepal and Sri Lanka
- Digitization of PASS Plus
- Creation of workflows and data reporting requirements for PASS Plus finalized and shared with Dimagi team for creating version 0 of the app

- Learning Management System platform for PASS Plus finalized
- Community Engagement Toolkit
- Participatory research with diverse stakeholder groups (n=94) using co-design methodology for the development of NAMSASTE community engagement and awareness tools.
- 9 multi-media tool-kit for community engagement developed and adapted in local language in India.



Project Name	PAHAL (Promoting a Holistic Approach to Learning)
Project Duration	November 2022 to January 2024
Project PI/Lead	Percy Cardozo
Project Location	Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh

The Beyond Boundaries project (2015-2021) supported schools in Goa to adopt a whole-school approach to inclusion. The PAHAL project, an extension of Beyond Boundaries, was implemented at Udaya Public School in Ayodhya from November 2022 to January 2023. It aimed to create a holistic, inclusive ecosystem by building teacher capacity, strengthening student support, and fostering a wellbeing-centered environment.

Key achievements/outputs

- We helped the school Set up a School Inclusion Committee (SIC) to develop a vision for an inclusive school, conduct a school audit and create an implementation plan
- Establish student-centred services to support students' well-being and academic difficulties
- A learning centre to support students struggling with learning challenges
- A counselling cell with non-specialist counsellors supervised by a senior counsellor
- Sensitise and train teachers in the following areas:
 - Inclusive education
 - Diversity in the classroom – developmental problems, behavioural and emotional problems and social issues.
 - Dealing with diversity in the classroom through activity-based sessions
- Initiating a cadre of mentor teachers to support their peers.
- Linking the school to partner organisations
- Training in person-centred planning, for the school as a group and for students struggling with learning difficulties.
- Integrating value-based practices into teaching methodologies and interactions with students.
- Demonstrated the importance of working with all stakeholders to create inclusive ecosystem

- School support staff, including admins and other support staff such as the school peons, security personnel, librarians etc.
- Sensitized students to diversity and created a cadre of peer ambassadors to sensitize the whole school community of students.



Project Name	Scalable Transdiagnostic Early Assessment of Mental health
Project Duration	2019-2025
Project PI/Lead	Prof Bhisnadev Chakrabarti, University of Reading
Project Location	India, Malawi

About the project

STREAM (Scalable Transdiagnostic Early Assessment of Mental health) aims to create a scalable tablet-based assessment tool for non-specialists to assess the development of children aged 0-6 years in the attention and cognition, fine motor, and social domains. It will map population distribution scores for these key developmental domains and test the utility of this transdiagnostic platform in identifying delayed development or the presence of any developmental disorders. The ability of the tool to measure the impact of adversities on brain development, its test-retest reliability, and its ability to monitor change in development over time will also be determined.

Key achievements/outputs

- Trained 6 non-specialists on using STREAM app to conduct assessments in India
- Each site has conducted assessments on over 2000 children, 1850 typically developing children from communities in low-resource neighborhoods
- Over 200 clinically diagnosed neuro-divergent children.
- Test-rest and longitudinal follow-up assessments have been done on a subset of the sample.



Project Name	AANAND
Project Duration	2021-ongoing
Project PI/Lead	Anant Bhan
Project Location	Sehore district, Madhya Pradesh, India

About the project

AANAND, being implemented in Sehore district, Madhya Pradesh, is a randomized controlled trial evaluating the effectiveness of a positive psychology-based coaching intervention, compared to routine supervision provided by the health system, in improving mental wellbeing and reducing work stress and burnout of rural community health workers (ASHAs), and thereby, improving their delivery of services. Launched in 2021, this first-of-its-kind study in the Indian setting has the potential to inform frameworks for addressing stress and burnout among grass-root community health workers, who address the health needs of the population at large. AANAND is a study funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation.

Key achievements/outputs

- Rolled out the Main Trial and recruited 332 ASHAs in the study
- 269 ASHAs received baseline assessment and were randomized.
- 126 ASHAs received the intervention workshop.
- 931 coaching calls have been delivered as a part of the intervention
- 211 ASHAs received 1-month follow-up
- 176 ASHAs received 3-month follow-up
- 93 ASHAs received 6-month follow-up
- 3053 HAP Sessions have been conducted till date.
- 2-day orientation for depression care activities, completed for 307 trained ASHAs
- Patient Recruitment completed for 296 ASHAs
- Patients who received baseline PHQ-9 - 746
- Patients who received endpoint PHQ-9 – 535
- Manuscripts Published: -1.) Development of a character-strengths based coaching program for rural community health workers to address their work stress in Madhya Pradesh, India in Current Psychology -2.) “We are everyone's ASHAs but who's there for us?” a qualitative exploration of perceptions of work stress and coping among rural frontline workers in Madhya Pradesh, India in SSM (Social Science and Medicine)
- Manuscripts Under Review: 1.) Protocol Paper under review in Contemporary Clinical Trials Communications. 2.) Pilot Paper under review in Journal of Happiness Studies.
- Study Findings were presented at two international conferences – 13th Asian Conference on Psychology and Behavioural Sciences in Tokyo, Japan and International Congress of Psychology in Prague, Czech Republic.



Project Name	ESSENCE or 'Enabling translation of Science to Service to ENhance Depression Care' - ESSENCE Implementation trial
Project Duration	2017-2024
Project PI/Lead	Vikram Patel, PI (Harvard Medical School), Anant Bhan, Site PI (Sangath India)
Project Location	Sehore district, Madhya Pradesh, India

About the project

ESSENCE project aims to enhance mental health care in South Asia by bridging the gap between scientific research and clinical services. The ESSENCE implementation trial aims to reduce the treatment gap for depression by integrating depression treatments into routine primary care services in rural areas.

Key achievements/outputs

- Trial launched on 6th October 2022 for a one-year period
- Fourteen rural primary health centres delivered primary depression care in Sehore, MP, and out of these, seven intervention arm clinics receiving the enhanced implementation support coaching intervention
- The coaching intervention involved a total of 35 remote support calls and 51 visits to the seven intervention arm facilities over a year.
- Overall, ~9129 outpatients were screened for depression (10.5%), 111 were screened positive (2.3%), 65 screen-positive patients were referred to medical officer, and 45 patients were initiated on treatment (as of trial closure on 5th October 2023).
- Manuscripts accepted:
 - ESSENCE training and implementation trial overview ('Hubs' paper) in Psychiatric Services
 - ESSENCE implementation trial protocol paper in Frontiers in Health Services
 - Learnings of ESSENCE implementation trial were presented at a symposium at the '12th Global Mental Health Research Without Borders Conference', Bethesda, USA, organized by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

Key findings of the trial:

- Control arm facilities screened more patients (overall, by ~2.3%), but substantial inter-facility variation was observed in both arms
- The rates of screened-positivity, doctor-referral, and treatment-initiation were significantly higher in intervention facilities.
- Rates of in-person visits by intervention (implementation support) team were higher than remote coaching calls
- Enhanced implementation coaching support contributes to higher quality implementation of depression care, with meaningful impact on screened-positivity and treatment initiation for depression in primary care

However, health system challenges dent the impact of the intervention, in particular, lack of dedicated space for depression screening, inadequate staff/workloads, doctor absenteeism, and no additional incentives for depression care

Project Name	A Mixed Methods Study to Evaluate the Adoption of the Digital “National NCD portal” across Primary Health Centres in Madhya Pradesh, India and its relationship with patient follow-up”
Project Duration	April 2023 to September 2024
Project PI/Lead	Dr. Anant Bhan (Sangath, Bhopal) and Dr Sharad Tiwari (NHM, M.P)
Project Location	Sehore district, Madhya Pradesh, India

About the project

The aim of this exploratory study is to evaluate the challenges or barriers in the adoption and usage of the National NCD Portal at Primary Health Centers and if these barriers affect the NCD service delivery and the rates and patterns of patient treatment and follow-up. The study has a mixed-methods design including a self-reported quantitative survey targeted at PHC facility staff on the NCD portal usage, and the health facility readiness assessment, followed by qualitative in-depth interviews of the PHC managers and other PHC staff based at Sehore, Narmadapuram and Bhopal districts in Madhya Pradesh, India. We also conducted direct observations of NCD portal use (qualitative) and obtained facility-level data on patient treatment to meet our research objectives. We aimed to recruit a cross-section of PHCs in these three districts.

Key achievements/outputs

The data collection phase of the study has been completed. As part of this study the quantitative data was collected from 35 medical officers, 35 ANMs, 35 staff nurses, and 19 data entry operators across 36 PHCs in the Sehore, Narmadapuram, and Bhopal districts of Madhya Pradesh, as well as from four district-level portal trainers. For the qualitative data collection, a total of 50 in-depth interviews were conducted with medical officers (21 interviews), their corresponding ANMs (1 interview), nurses (10 interviews), data entry operators (14 interviews), and district-level portal trainers (4 interviews), using an open-ended, semi-structured guide

Workshops and conferences

A two-day synthesis workshop at Bhopal focusing on "Health Policy and Systems Research: The Role of Digital Interventions in Strengthening LMIC Health Systems." During this workshop, we presented our team's preliminary findings on "The Adoption and Utilization of the Digital 'National Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) Portal' Across Primary Health Centers in Madhya Pradesh." The workshop also brought together minds from organizations to explore digital solutions in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs).

The ‘Health policy and system research workshop on the role of digital interventions in strengthening LMIC health systems: Coinvestigator Synthesis Workshop’ organized by WHO [Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research](#) from June 12th to 14th, 2024, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Participants from across LMICs i.e., Bhutan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Georgia, and India, came together to share contextual insights, challenges, and innovations.

We have presented our abstract at the Health Tech Asia Conference Jakarta, Indonesia (Hybrid Platform), exploring the latest research, ideas, and solutions related to Health and Technology. This conference is a unique opportunity to connect with leading educators, researchers, policymakers, and other stakeholders from around the world. The Health Tech Asia 2024 will bring together a wide range of research and case studies from around the world, under the theme "Digital Transformation in Healthcare: Navigating the Era of Healthcare Revolution."

Our presentation, titled "Implications of Digital National Non-Communicable Disease Portal in the Primary Health Centers of Madhya Pradesh, India," delved into the significant impact of the National NCD Portal on primary healthcare centers, and the medical officers and staff directly involved in its usage.

Our team has presented abstract on "Readiness of the Primary Health Centers of Madhya Pradesh, India to implement and govern the National Digital Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) Portal " at fourth edition of "Bringing Evidence to Public Health Policy" (EHP) from September 5th to 7th at IIM Bangalore, India organized by The Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIM Bangalore), and The George Institute for Global Health with support from Health Systems Global. Our abstract was presented and discussed under the theme "Stewardship of digital transformations including AI and big data"

Project Name	Scalable Digital Phenotyping of Momentary Cognition in Early Course Psychosis
Project Duration	June 2023 to May 2026
Project PI/Lead	Dr John Torous (Overall Study PI), Dr Anant Bhan (Sangath Site PI), Dr Abhijit Rozatkar (AIIMS, Bhopal-Site PI), Dr. Urvakhsh Mehta
Project Location	Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India

About the project

The aim of this multi-site study is to create smartphone application that allows for the measurement of 'cognition,' which encompasses thought processes such as attention, memory, planning, and understanding others' emotions and thoughts. Individuals with schizophrenia often struggle with these cognitive functions, which can significantly affect their ability to work, study, and maintain relationships in everyday life. Traditionally, cognitive assessments are conducted in person by experts using either computer-based or paper-pencil methods. By implementing cognitive tests through smartphone apps, we can evaluate a larger number of individuals simultaneously. Additionally, conducting brief cognitive assessments in environments outside of hospitals—such as homes, workplaces, or schools—can provide insights that reflect their real-world functioning more accurately.

Key achievements/outputs

- The first phase of the study has been completed across the sites.
- Qualitative data collection with patients and clinicians were conducted across the sites. At BIDMC, 23 individual (with an average age of 40) interviews were conducted, at AIIMS Bhopal, the number of participants ranged from seven to nine per group, totaling 25 individuals (with an average age of 34), and at NIMHANS, 25 participants (with an average age of 34) were recruited. All the participants were receiving clinical care for a diagnosis of schizophrenia.
- Findings from FGDs shared across the site to make revisions in the mindLamp app.
- The adaptation of the mindLamp app to test cognition has been completed.
- Pilot phase of the study is being run to test the adapted mindLamp.

Project Name	Optimized- Improving outcomes in depression in primary care in a low-resource setting.
Project Duration	4 years
Project PI/Lead	Dr Vikram Patel, Dr Anant Bhan, Dr Steven D. Hollon
Project Location	Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India

About the project

The OptimizedD study aims to improve outcomes in depression in primary care in India. As part of this study, we will randomize 1500 patients with moderate to severe depression to either psychotherapy based on behavioral activation called the Healthy Activity Program (HAP) or antidepressant medication (fluoxetine). The main objective of the OptimizedD study is to determine whether different patients respond differentially to HAP or fluoxetine and, if so, whether we can optimize outcomes in a cost-effective fashion for primary care patients with moderate to severe depression.

Key achievements/outputs

- The pilot was conducted from July 2023 to December 2023 across 8 PHCs in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. We recruited 78 patients as part of the pilot.
- Between January and March 2024, we completed phase 2 of our project, which involved recruiting 45 patients from the general population, who then received HAP counseling sessions.
- A five-day meeting, held from January 19th to 23rd, 2024 gathered study collaborators from Harvard Medical School, AIIMS Bhopal, Sangath Bhopal, Vanderbilt University, and the University of Toronto. This pivotal gathering focused on solidifying study procedures, including technical aspects, study designs, and site selection, ensuring comprehensive preparation for the forthcoming Main Trial. The genomic, HAP, ADM, and Economic aspects were discussed at length.
- The main trial was initiated on 18th March 2024. To date, we have recruited 381 patients in the main trial (192 are randomized in HAP and 189 in ADM).
- During the year we have conducted four Medical Officers' training at AIIMS Bhopal. These trainings included an overview of the study, recruitment status in the main trial, the ADM prescription flowchart and a discussion on the side effects of ADM. Trainings also had sessions on SH+ module of WHO.
- We have conducted 54 sensitization and awareness campaigns on depression in primary health care centres and shelter Homes (Rain Basera) and have reached out to more than 500 people from the community. 25 MOs, 85 ASHAs and 20 ANMs attended these camps.



Project Name	PEERS (Promoting effective mental healthcare through peer supervision.)
Project Duration	2021-2024
Project PI/Lead	Anant Bhan , Dr Ravindra Agrawal, Ankita Shah
Project Location	Madhya Pradesh, Goa

About the project

The project aims to assess acceptability and feasibility of the digitally-enabled, peer supervision (intervention) on supervision attendance and completion of peer-ratings; effectiveness of the intervention on the reliability of the peer ratings; the impact of the intervention on NSP delivered therapy quality, and finally impact of improved therapy quality on patient outcomes. The project aims to assess acceptability and feasibility of the digitally-enabled, peer supervision (intervention) on supervision attendance and completion of peer-ratings; effectiveness of the intervention on the reliability of the peer ratings; the impact of the intervention on NSP delivered therapy quality, and finally impact of improved therapy quality on patient outcomes.

Key Achievements:

- Successfully recruited and trained 302 ASHAs in the Narmadapuram district, Madhya Pradesh.
- Developed and completed training for ASHAs on the E-PEERS supervision course.
- Completed the development of the digital platform, which includes the PEERS Counsellors' App, Supervisor Dashboard, and Peer Supervisor's App.
- Conducted 15 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) across all project phases (Phase 1: Counsellors in the internship phase, Phase 2: Counsellors in the peer supervisor internship phase, and Phase 3: Counsellors credentialed as peer supervisors). Coding for these FGDs has been completed, and the analysis is underway.
- A total of 14,476 screenings have been conducted by the trained ASHAs over a period of 2.5 years.
- Out of the 1,242 patients who screened positive and were enrolled in the study, 698 (56%) have completed their treatment, while 224 patients are still receiving treatment from ASHAs.
- Over 4,000 HAP sessions have been recorded by ASHAs using the PEERS digital app.
- Clinical supervisors conducted and rated 1,497 supervision sessions via the Supervisor's Dashboard on the digital platform.
- The therapy quality of HAP sessions delivered by ASHAs is rated at 2.13 on a scale of 0 to 4.
- The supervision quality of sessions conducted by Clinical supervisors is rated at 2.80 on a scale of 0 to 4.



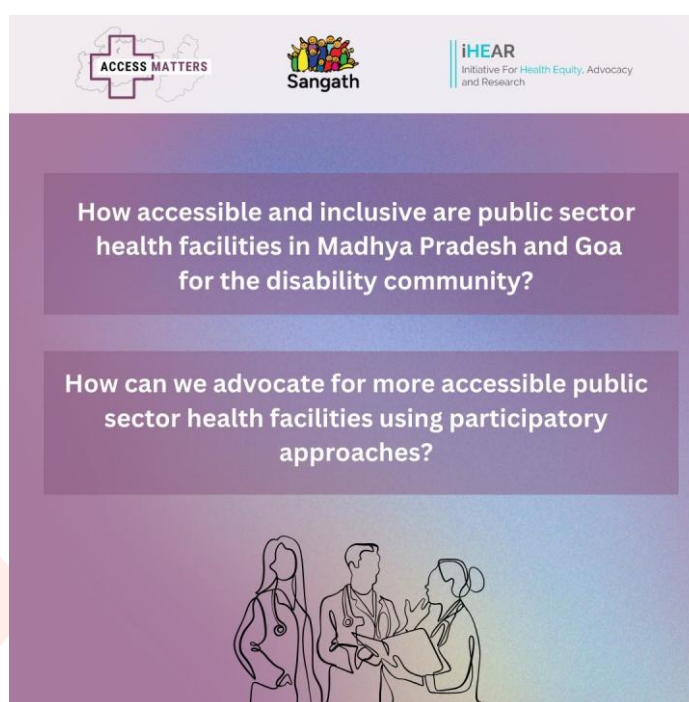
Project Name	IHEAR Access Matters
Project Duration	January 2024 to June 2024
Project PI/Lead	Anant Bhan
Project Location	Madhya Pradesh, Goa

About the project

iHEAR Access Matters is a participatory action research project that aims to make public health facilities more accessible and inclusive for people with disabilities. Funded by the Azim Premji University Health Research Funding Programme 2023, this project will conduct audits of secondary and tertiary public health facilities in the states of Madhya Pradesh and Goa, to highlight the existing accessibility structures in public health facilities and formulate action plans to increase accessibility.

Key achievements/outputs

- Set up a community advisory board
- Developed an audit checklist



Project Name	Disability Inclusive Compassionate Care – DICC 2.0
Project Duration	July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024
Project PI/Lead	Kamala G. Cotts; Anant Bhan
Project Location	Madhya Pradesh, Goa

About the project

Disability Inclusive Compassionate Care (DICC) 2.0 aimed to equip a cohort of health-professional educators (HPEs) to train medical students on disability competencies through the use of the following arts-based methods: Poetry, Graphic Medicine, Disability Ethics, and Theater of the Oppressed. Using these tools from the health humanities, experienced facilitators imparted an understanding of

disability competencies in a manner that is distinct from the methods in which medicine is traditionally taught and learnt.

Key achievements/outputs

- 60 medical faculty from diverse colleges and specializations across the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) were trained in the use of health humanities methods to teach disability competencies. Participants were from departments of psychiatry, biochemistry, physiology, orthopedics, pediatrics, forensic medicine, and a majority were professors, associate professors, and heads of departments at their medical colleges. They attended four sets of workshops on Poetry, Graphic Medicine, Disability Ethics, and Theater of the Oppressed, which were conducted by experienced facilitators and faculty members from UChicago, University College of Medical Sciences Delhi, Jamia Hamdard University Delhi, and iHEAR team, Sangath Bhopal Hub.
- 13 faculty members went on to pilot these methods at their respective institutions across the state of Maharashtra under MUHS with approximately 560 healthcare students in disability-inclusive competencies. The methods were piloted as part of foundational courses with students from MBBS (including in orthopedics and forensic medicine departments) and physiotherapy, nursing.



Project Name	iHEAR Doctors for Equity (DfE)
Project Duration	March 2023 to May 2024
Project PI/Lead	Dr Anant Bhan
Project Location	Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir

About the project:

Doctors for Equity project builds on Sangath’s ongoing participatory work with the LGBTQIA+ community. This project aims to train medical educators across different parts of North India on LGBTQIA+ inclusive health care. This was done through a national level consultation followed by a series of training sessions in medical colleges across northern India. The training workshops were conducted by project co-leads who are from the LGBTQIA+ community and/or have expertise in delivering such sessions, in medical education and in LGBTQIA+ health research.

Key achievements/outputs:

- LGBTQIA+ competencies were developed and reviewed by 80 participants including healthcare professionals, educators, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and community members by conducting 1 national in-person and 2 virtual consultations.
- A comprehensive booklet on LGBTQIA+ inclusive medical education called 'Colours in your Care' was developed:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Bfk61CF6X1xLtrNLhJEAxPnk009PtM83/view>
- Three training workshops were conducted for a total of 91 medical educators in North India, namely, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Jodhpur, Era's Lucknow Medical College and Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar. The training focused on the developed competencies, basics of sex, gender and sexuality and LGBTQIA+ affirmative care using innovative methods and interactive activities.
- A final review and consultation meeting was held on April 27th and 28th, 2024 in Bhopal bringing together 23 participants including the iHEAR team and collaborators. The discussions and feedback gathered during this event laid a strong foundation for the continued progress towards LGBTQIA+ inclusive medical education.

Project Name	iHEAR Peers for Equity (P4E)
Project Duration	2022 – 2023
Project PI/Lead	Anant Bhan
Project Location	India

About the project

The first cohort dissemination event took place in May 2023 in Delhi. Recognizing the need for disability community representation, the project extended the fellowship in the second cohort. The structure of this extended fellowship closely mirrored the previous cohort, granting fellows access to the P4E digital course, along with weekly capacity-building and peer-learning sessions. An academic output is also being developed from this project.

Key achievements/outputs:

- A two-day dissemination event was organized to provide a platform for the 22 fellows in the first cohort to articulate and share their final fellowship outputs and the exploration of collaborative opportunities among fellows.
- The second cohort, focusing on disability communities, addressed representation imbalances, with ten dedicated fellows.
- The second cohort followed the same format as the first one with the fellows engaging with digital course, capacity building and peer-learning sessions and developing fellowship outputs.
- The project underscores the importance of adaptable, participatory, and inclusive approaches to capacity building, emphasizing that continuous learning and community-driven initiatives are pivotal in the pursuit of health equity and social justice.



Project Name	Qinship
Project Duration	January 2023 to Feb 2024
Project PI/Lead	Salik Ansari
Project Location	India

About the project:

Older adults with non-heterosexual identities such as lesbian, gay, or bisexual are less visible in the conversations around the rights and well-being of sexual minorities in India. We conducted qualitative research using a community-based participatory approach to understand kinship in the older queer population of urban India. Our approach involved conducting in-depth interviews with people representing various identities within the older LGB+ population. Our research question was: What are the different forms of kinship, and what are their perceived meaning and significance in the lives of LGB+ individuals aged 50 and above living in urban India? We used frameworks of minority stress theory and intersectionality to inform our approach to this study.

Key achievements/outputs

- Completion of research activities of the project
- Organisation of a public dissemination event to share the findings of the project

Project Name	Queer Chronicles (QC)
Project Duration	July 2023 – September 2024
Project PI/Lead	Anant Bhan, Aniruddha Hazra
Project Location	India

About the project

Queer Chronicles aims to develop first-person narratives of LGBTQIAP+ community members' lived experiences in healthcare in the Indian context, in order to inform culturally appropriate teaching materials on LGBTQIAP+ competencies for health professionals. By collaborating with key stakeholders and utilizing their expertise, the project will create resources that provide education on the unique healthcare needs and experiences of LGBTQIAP+ individuals.

Key achievements/outputs

- 42 LGBTQIAP+ community members from all over India were engaged through three sets of workshops held in UCMS Delhi, Sangath Bhopal, and online with participants from Northeast India and South India. Experienced mentors from the community oriented them into arts-based methods such as zine making, reflective writing, and audiovisual narrative techniques, which they then used to develop their own narratives.
- Through these engagements, 17 narratives in diverse formats (poetry, documentary-style storytelling, dance, comics, zines, case studies, essays, ghazals) were submitted by participants, creating a repository of first-person narratives of LGBTQIAP+ experiences in healthcare. This repository will be disseminated through social media and also converted into a teaching guide that health professional educators can implement in health sciences education.

Project Name	iHEAR RainbowMed (RM)
Project Duration	September 2023 - ongoing
Project PI/Lead	Anant Bhan
Project Location	India

About the project

The iHEAR RainbowMed project focuses on the implementation of LGBTQIA+ affirmative competencies by conducting a series of sensitization workshops for medical educators in Western India. These competencies are further refined through consultations with community members and medical educators. The project aims to create an inclusive healthcare environment that addresses the unique needs of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Key achievements/outputs:

- Organized a Sensitization and Consultation workshop with 42 participants from departments such as Biochemistry, Physiology, Public Health, Community Medicine, Paediatrics, Microbiology, etc, from Gandhi Medical College in Bhopal.
- Conducted a key in-person consultation with 12 LGBTQIA+ community members in Bhopal.
- The second workshop titled “LGBTQIA+ Inclusivity in Medical Education” was held virtually on June 19th and 20th, 2024, attracting 42 to 50 daily participants from 18 states across India, including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi.
- In the process of developing a teaching guide for medical educators to teach LGBTQIA+ competencies in MBBS curriculum.

Project Name	iHEAR TransMHPrep: Trans-affirmative mental health care provision during public health emergencies: Insights from the COVID-19 pandemic
Project Duration	January 2024 to October 2024
Project PI/Lead	Anant Bhan
Project Location	Bhopal

About the project:

[Research](#) shows that transgender and gender-diverse (TGD) persons were disproportionately affected during the COVID-19 pandemic in accessing healthcare in comparison to their cis-gender counterparts. During such public health crises, healthcare responses would often leave out transgender and gender-diverse (TGD) people pushing them to the margins.

Despite the significant mental healthcare burden, TGD persons report limited use of mental health services. This is due to negative experiences with providers and fear of being pathologized, a lack of trans affirmative service providers and affordability while seeking mental healthcare.

The current study aims to understand and document the experiences of mental health professionals and CSOs in providing mental health and psychosocial support to TGD persons during the COVID-19 Pandemic. It further aims to inform best practices to ensure pandemic preparedness for TGD persons.

Key achievements/outputs:

- Completion of research activities of the project

- The project set up a community advisory board (CAB) which has met twice in March 2024, July 2024 to provide their insights on inquiry, research methods and topic guides.

Project Name	iHEAR VaccinEquity 2.0
Project Duration	March 2023 to December 2024
Project PI/Lead	Anant Bhan
Project Location	Bhopal

About the project

This project aims to expand the WHO's Behavioral and Social Drivers framework for vaccination among adults for the transgender, intersex and disability communities in India. This will be done using a mixed-methods approach.

Key achievements/outputs

- Completed interviews, scoping review and reanalysis to develop over 75 items for the expanded survey
- Completed a stakeholder review exercise to shortlist the number of survey items
- Completed cognitive interviews for cultural adaptation of the survey
- Completed translation and reverse translation of the survey to Hindi
- Initiated training of field investigators for conducting the survey

Project Name	SAMBHAV
Project Duration	2011-2023
Project PI/Lead	Anant Bhan
Project Location	Sehore district, Madhya Pradesh, India

About the project

SAMBHAV aimed to address community health workers (ASHA workers) by digitizing pilot testing the evidence-based World Health Organization's Self-Help Plus (SH+) intervention for addressing psychological distress among CHWs (ASHA workers) in Sehore, Madhya Pradesh, India. In SMABHAV we developed and evaluated the feasibility, acceptability and preliminary effectiveness of a stress reduction program tailored to the needs, context, and local culture, and to explore whether reducing stress among CHWs may impact their wellbeing and the quality of care they deliver.

Key achievements/outputs

- SMABHAV was implemented from June 2021-September 2023.
- 18 ASHAs participated in the intervention development process and the projected was implemented involving 40 ASHA workers who were not part of the intervention development process.
- Intervention was delivered for a five-week period; baseline and follow-up outcome assessments data collected.
- Data analyses in progress; results are awaited.

- Intervention development manuscript “Stress Alleviation Methods for community-Based Health ActiVists (SAMBHAV): Development of a digital program for stress reduction for community health workers in rural India” SSM Mental Health journal.

Project Name	Enhancing institutional research management capacity
Project Duration	April 2024- March 2025
Project PI/Lead	Godwin Fernandes
Project Location	Goa

About the Project:

The aim of this grant is to address the identified gaps in research support services at Sangath. Specifically, the grant seeks to streamline operations within the Office of Project Management (OPM) to implement effective change management strategies, to strengthen post-award management processes to ensure compliance and efficient project implementation, establish a centralized grants database to facilitate access to funding opportunities, and provide capacity building initiatives to support staff and early career researchers.

Through these efforts, the grant aims to build a robust research management infrastructure at Sangath that supports and empowers researchers, fosters a culture of compliance and excellence, and enables strategic planning and collaboration for future research endeavors.

Key achievements/outputs

- **Increased access to funding opportunities:**
 - Implementation of a refined web-based search strategy tailored to researchers' areas of interest.
 - Identification and application for funding in previously unexplored areas of interest.
 - Expansion of the organisation's CSR funding portfolio through education and training.
- **Improved post-award management support:**
 - Strengthened post-award processes, including grant setup, compliance, budget monitoring, forecasting, and closure.
 - Enhanced support for grant holders, particularly Early Career Researchers (ECRs), in navigating compliance requirements and financial regulations.
- **Streamlined data inquiries and avoidance of duplication:**
 - Creation of a comprehensive database containing organisational Principal Investigators (PIs) and funder-wise data.
 - Reduction in time and effort spent on data inquiries by researchers, particularly in the grant writing process.
- **Development of an open-access manual:**
 - Creation of a manual providing guidance on setting up research and development offices.

Project Name	MADAD (Mobilizing for Anxiety and Depression in Adolescents)
Project Duration	2022-ongoing
Project PI/Lead	Abhijit Nadkarni, Urvita Bhatia
Project Location	Goa

About the project:

The MADAD project aims to provide evidenced-based psychological support to adolescents in Goa, India using peers as delivery agents. The intervention would be rigorously evaluated for feasibility and acceptability among adolescents aged 15-18 years in Goa.

Key achievements/outputs:

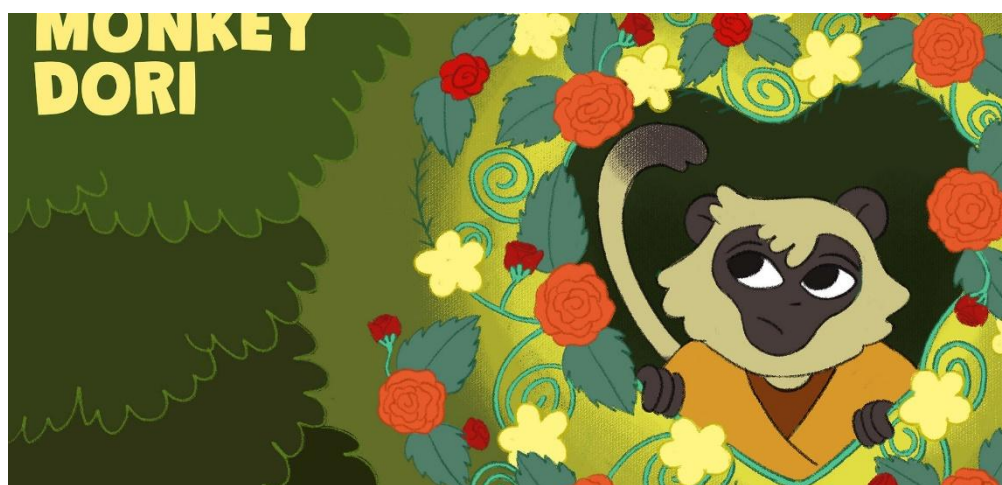
- Intervention development process with an Expert Advisory group (comprising two psychologists and a Youth Advisor), to transform evidence-based components into ‘By Your Side’ an intervention that uses youth-friendly techniques and materials to improve adolescent mental health.
- ‘By Your Side’ is a 10-session intervention designed to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression among adolescents. We use games, story-telling, and mindful journaling, delivered in a collaborative 1:1 style by older peers, to work with school students aged 15-18 years.
- Training of 20 college students (aged 18-20 years) in the ‘By Your Side’ intervention as peer delivery agents



Project Name	Dating Violence
Project Duration	2019-ongoing
Project PI/Lead	Devika Gupta, Abhijit Nadkarni
Project Location	Goa

About the project:

The Dating Violence project is a mixed methods study that aims to develop an intervention to improve the mental health effects associated with experiencing dating violence among adolescents and young people (aged 15 to 24) in India. A part of this study is in pursuit of a doctoral degree at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK.



Key achievements/outputs:

- A qualitative systematic review on experiences of dating violence in Low and Middle Income Countries
- ‘The adventures of Monkey Dori’ an interactive graphic novel style game inspired by the classic Panchatantra tales, where players choose the actions of the main character (Monkey Dori) to increase their awareness about unhealthy and abusive behaviours that are normalised in dating relationships. The game also provides tools to make healthier decisions, communicate emotions better, and resolve conflicts respectfully. We are developing a full-length game (version 1) based on feedback received from the prototype and youth consultation workshops conducted with youth advisors.

Project Name	IMPACT-T
Project Duration	November 2021- July 2024
Project PI/Lead	Ravindra Agarwal
Project Location	Mundgod, Kollegal, Hunsur, Bylakkuppe (Karnataka)

About the project:

IMPACT-T (IMProving ACcess through Telepsychiatry - Tibet) is implementing a telepsychiatry and counselling program across 4 Tibetan settlements in Karnataka, to bridge the care gap for mental health problems in the refugee community.

Key achievements/outputs:

- 250 beneficiaries registered on the IMPACT-T platform, and more than 1500 assisted telepsychiatry sessions have been delivered to them
- 24 Nurses and 10 Medical Officers from the settlements have been trained in delivering the Healthy Activity Program (HAP), of which 19 are certified as HAP trainers. 25 Community volunteers from the settlement are trained in delivering the IMPRESS ‘Sangathi’ intervention, that focusses on uptake for and adherence to, HAP.
- Surveyed 3301 Tibetan refugees in 35 Tibetan settlements across India to understand the prevalence of mental health problems and substance use disorders, as well as their sociodemographic correlates, and their relationship to other correlates such as disability.



Project Name	Me We Sports
Project Duration	2022-2023
Project PI/Lead	Prof Vikram Patel, Prof Abhijit Nadkarni, Urvita Bhatia, Suheil Tandon
Project Location	Goa

About the project:

Project MeWeSports addresses young people’s mental health and social needs through physical activity and skills-building that promote resilience, belonging, and community cohesion. It offers organized activities, social support from peers, coaches, and families. Using non-traditional platforms such as community sports clubs we are leveraging the strengths of sports in promoting mental health and empower existing youth-friendly community resources to prevent substance use initiation and mental health problems.

Key achievements/outputs -

- Conducted the first pilot project in Goa, where the intervention was delivered by coaches and youth champions to adolescents aged 12-14 years in a school-based sports setting from January to March, 2023.
- Gathered evidence on the feasibility, acceptability, and potential impact of the intervention, providing critical insights for further refinement.
- Hosted a national consultative workshop in New Delhi with sports, health, and youth experts, alongside young people, and program developers. The three-day event addressed challenges from the pilot phase and built consensus on refinement areas for the MeWeSports intervention.
- Refined the intervention package based on inputs from community stakeholders.
- Developed protocols for adolescent substance use prevention research, including monitoring and evaluation systems to measure program impact and quality in the future.

Project Name	PEERS (Promoting effective mental healthcare through peer supervision.)
Project Duration	2021-2025
Project PI/Lead	Abhijit Nadkarni , Daisy Singla
Project Location	Goa

About the project

PEERS aims to test a peer-supervision mobile application and understand the impact of this on the quality of therapy delivered by non-specialist community healthcare workers, and finally impact of improved therapy quality on patient outcomes.

Key achievements/outputs:

- Trained 25 counsellors to use the PEERS application, which captures patient data and session audio recordings that can be rated later by specialists.
- 5 qualitative interviews with counsellors on using the Counsellor app and the process of supervision and 1 FGD with Supervisors focusing on using the Peer Supervisor dashboard and the process of supervision.

- Published- Scaling up the task-sharing of psychological therapies: A formative study of the PEERS smartphone application for supervision and quality assurance in rural India, on formative work done in the project. (2024)

Project Name	PracticePal
Project Duration	2022-2024
Project PI/Lead	Dr Ravindra Agrawal
Project Location	Raisen district (Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh) & Goa

About the project:

PracticePal aims to enhance the outcomes of counselling sessions through the consistent and comprehensive practice of planned activities.

Key achievements/outputs:

- Successful design, development and implementation of chatbot across study sites
- Training non-specialists with skills to provide HAP counselling for depression: 15 ASHA workers (Raisen pilot), 15 volunteers (Goa pilot)
- Providing HAP therapy to 67 patient participants across 2 pilot sites
- In-Depth-interviews with 10 patient participants to understand their experience of using a chatbot as a therapy-aid, how the chatbot impacted their treatment and any feedback on the chatbot that they may have. Focus-group-discussions with 3 groups of non-specialist delivery agents on their understanding of client's experiences using the chatbot, challenges they may have faced with the chatbot and feedback on the chatbot.

Project Name	SAATHI
Project Duration	2023 - 25
Project PI/Lead	Dr Ravindra Agrawal
Project Location	India

About the project

Project SAATHI addresses the critical issue of coercion and involuntary treatment in mental health care, which violates the fundamental rights of individuals with severe mental illness (SMI). The innovation aims to reduce these practices by developing a standardized digital curriculum to train peer support workers. This curriculum is co-produced with individuals who have lived experience of SMI and experts in the field.

The goal is to empower peer support workers to provide person-centered care, fostering recovery and reducing stigma. The content includes foundational and advanced competencies for peer support, focusing on supported decision-making and promoting the rights and preferences of individuals with SMI. This initiative seeks to bridge the significant treatment gap in India by leveraging peer support as a sustainable and effective solution.

Key achievements/outputs

- **Coverage:** Engaged with over 250 individuals, including persons with mental health conditions, experts, and organizational workers.

- **Outcome:** Improved quality of life, empowerment, and social inclusion for service users through peer support interventions.
- **Cost-effectiveness:** Utilizes task shifting to non-specialist peer workers, addressing the significant treatment gap in India efficiently.



Project Name	Being
Project Duration	2023 - 24
Project PI/Lead	Abhijit Nadkarni and Dr. Soumitra Pathare
Project Location	India

About the project

To examine the youth mental health ecosystem in India, we are working in partnership with Sangath's Addictions and related Research Group (ARG), Goa, and have strategically employed a comprehensive, multi-level and interdisciplinary approach.

Key project activities include:

- A country wide desk review on youth mental health and initial interviews with experts to examine the existing knowledge base (and inherent gaps) on youth mental health
- Youth engagement initiatives and programmes to capture perspectives from young people through i) a multi-language national-level youth survey and ii) intensive photovoice workshops in the states of Odisha and Rajasthan. Photovoice is an exploratory research methodology where participants use pictures and facilitated discussions to provide insight into their unique life experiences
- Targeted consultative interviews with diverse stakeholders working on youth wellbeing to address gaps in information
- Focused consensus-building workshops in Jaipur and Bhubaneswar to bring together stakeholders working on-ground and arrive at actionable solutions for youth mental health
- Additionally, through the project we set up a Youth Advisory Board (YAB) to provide feedback on project activities and findings to ensure our work is relevant, accessible and comprehensive.

Key achievements/outputs

- The "Being India" initiative has made notable strides in addressing youth mental health in India through research, youth engagement, expert consultations, and consensus-building activities.
- **Comprehensive Understanding:** The project conducted a desk review and expert consultations, providing insights into the mental health landscape for young people in India. This research highlights critical gaps and opportunities, offering a foundation for future mental health policies and interventions.
- **Youth Engagement:** A key component of the project was involving young people in shaping the research. A national survey in English, Hindi, and Odia reached over 560 youth, capturing their perspectives on mental health. Additionally, 20 young participants from Odisha and Rajasthan took part in photovoice workshops. This method allowed participants to use photography and facilitated discussions to share their unique experiences, offering a deeper understanding of the factors influencing youth wellbeing.
- **Youth Advisory Board (YAB):** The creation of a Youth Advisory Board, with 9 members from different backgrounds, ensured that the voices of young people were reflected throughout the project. The board provided feedback on project activities, making the findings relevant, accessible, and youth-centered.
- **Expert Consultations:** The project consulted 43 experts from diverse fields, including government departments, civil society organizations, funders, and digital mental health platforms. These consultations helped broaden the understanding of the youth mental health ecosystem and identify solutions.
- **Consensus-Building Workshops:** In Odisha and Rajasthan, state-level workshops brought together key stakeholders, including health and education authorities, civil society representatives, and private sector actors. These workshops focused on identifying actionable solutions for improving youth mental health, fostering collaboration across sectors.
- **Strengthened Networks:** Through its activities, the project built strong national and regional networks that will support future advocacy and collaborative efforts to address youth mental health issues.
- **Public Good Report:** The findings from the project were published in a Public Good Report, launched in April 2024. This report highlights the main mental health needs of Indian youth and offers actionable insights for addressing these challenges at both national and regional levels.

In summary, "Being India" has contributed to a better understanding of youth mental health needs, engaged a broad range of stakeholders, and strengthened networks for ongoing collaboration. Its innovative approach has the potential to improve service user outcomes and lay the groundwork for reducing stigma and improving access to mental health services for young people across India.



Project Name	SAHARA (Supporting all mothers and children universally)
Project Duration	2024 - 27
Project PI/Lead	Dr Anant Bhan, Dr Gauri Divan, R Roy
Project Location	Raisen, Vidisha, Narmadapuram, Ujjain, Jhabua, Morena, Datia, Gwalior and Rewa districts of Madhya Pradesh

About the project:

Sangath aims to scale up evidence based ‘task sharing’ interventions for perinatal mental health and early child development through delivery of comprehensive primary mental health care for first 1000 days of life. We aim to scale these twin interventions across 9 districts of Madhya Pradesh by digitally training community-based workers (ASHAs and Anganwadi workers) and provide them continuous supervision.

Project objectives-

- To train 2400 ASHAs across 9 districts on THPP; an evidence-based intervention for perinatal depression
- To train 2400 ASHAs to deliver single session on maternal mental health awareness to all antenatal and postnatal women in their catchment area
- To contextually develop Lalan Palan; digital ECD intervention focusing on responsive caregiving.
- To train 2400 Anganwadi workers (AWWs) on the digital ECD intervention focusing on responsive caregiving.
- To train 1600 Community Health Officers (CHOs) on screening for perinatal depression, identification of symptoms and facilitate referrals.

Key achievements/outputs

- Formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with National Health Mission (NHM), Madhya Pradesh to work in 9 districts.
- Trained 1314 ASHAs on THPP.
- Trained 153 Community Health Officers (CHOs) on mental health screening and identification of symptoms of perinatal depression.
- Started the process of digitizing Lalan Palan; evidence informed early child development intervention focusing on responsive caregiving which will be delivered at an Anganwadi centre (AWC).

Project Name	Khushee Mamta - Here to Be
Project Duration	Feb 2024-Feb 2025
Project PI/Lead	Aneel Brar (PI), Dr Ravindra Agrawal, Dr Abhijit Nadkrani, Dr Aliyah Dosani, Rachel Greenley, Soumya Singh
Project Location	Rajasthan, India

About the project:

The MJK-Khushee Mamta (MJK-KM) or “Happy Motherhood” program is a lay counsellor-delivered maternal mental health intervention where local women are trained in counselling and collaborate with existing community health workers to identify pregnant and expectant mothers at risk for perinatal depression.

Key achievements/outputs-

- Khushee Mamta has trained 20 women as lay counsellors who provide counselling to rural women in more than 200 villages.
- So far, we have screened over 1000 women for depression and enrolled 150 women into the Khushee Mamta program.

Project Name	Khushee Mamta - Photovoice study
Project Duration	Feb 2024-Feb 2025
Project PI/Lead	Aneel Brar (PI), Dr Ravindra Agrawal, Dr Abhijit Nadkrani, Dr Aliyah Dosani, Dr Shahirose Premji, Dr Josephine Etowa
Project Location	Rajasthan, India

About the project:

The goal and purpose of our work was to use community-based participatory research (CBPR), photovoice, to explore and understand perinatal depression from a sociocultural perspective in rural Rajasthan, India so that we can develop culturally safe screening tools and intervention strategies for perinatal depression in terms of adaptations to a non-specialist-delivered perinatal depression program (Khushee Mamta [“Happy Motherhood”] in rural India.

Key achievements/outputs

- We collected photographs from 40 pregnant women which were exhibited at a gallery in the Rajasthan International Centre in Feb 2022.



Project Name	Khushee Mamta - Understanding lay counsellor experiences of transformation and relationship building
Project Duration	May 2022-May 2024
Project PI/Lead	Aneel Brar (PI), Dr Ravindra Agrawal, Dr Abhijit Nadkrani, Dr Aliyah Dosani, Dr Shahirose Premji
Project Location	Rajasthan, India

About the project:

The aim of this research project was to explore lay counsellors' experiences of becoming professionalized caregivers, trainers, and supervisors during the initial scaling-up phase of a non-specialist-delivered perinatal depression program (Khushee Mamta ["Happy Motherhood"]) in rural India (<https://matajaikaur.org>).

Key achievements/outputs-

- We collected qualitative data from 7 lay counsellor to identify key elements of relationship building and transformative effect of lay counselling on the counsellors. These findings will inform the development of an empowerment measurement tool for use with lay counsellors in low resource contexts.

Project Name	Common Definitions
Project Duration	April 2024-February 2025
Project PI/Lead	Dr Richard Velleman, Dr Abhijit Nadkarni
Project Location	India

About the project:

The Common Definition in Mental Health Science (CDMHS) is a landscaping project that aims to: a) identify priority mental health terms in anxiety, depression, and psychosis which may benefit most from greater consensus definition in the next five years; and b) clarify the degree of consensus (or lack of it) which exists for each of these prioritized terms, alongside an assessment of how possible it might be to reach consensus.

Key achievements/outputs:

- The team has produced an interim report that identifies 15 priority clinical concepts that could benefit from greater consensus definition. These are Recovery, Relapse, Remission, Prodrome, Drug-induced, First episode, Treatment resistance, Adherence, Comorbidity, Mechanism, and Resilience, Early Intervention, Compliance/Non-Compliance, Trauma/Trauma-informed Care, and Functional Impairment/Functional Outcomes. The terms have been derived through consultation with 25 experts in mental health clinical practice, research and lived experience; and through responses collected via an online global survey.

Project Name	IMPRESS [IMPLementation of evidence-based facility and community interventions to reduce the treatment gap for depression]
Project Duration	2019-ongoing
Project PI/Lead	Abhijit Nadkarni, Vikram Patel
Project Location	Goa

About the project:

IMPRESS aims to reduce the treatment gap for depression by addressing both, supply and demand side barriers. The supply side will be targeted by scaling up the Healthy Activity Program (HAP), an evidence-based psychological treatment, to all primary health centers in Goa. The demand side will be targeted by developing a community-based intervention which will increase awareness, uptake, and adherence to the depression treatment.

Key achievements/outputs:

- The trial protocol has been published in the BMC trials journal.
- From 1st Nov 2023 to 31st Aug 2024, there were a total of 59,791 people screened. Out of these, 10,121 were positive for mild depression [PHQ-9 score of 5 and above].
- There are a total of 53 active counsellors delivering the counselling treatment [Healthy Activity Program] in the primary health care centres.
- There are a total of 124 Sangathis [community volunteers] that are delivering the community interventions being tested.
- We have completed 10 interviews with Sangathis [community volunteers] and 14 interviews with counsellors during the trial phase.



Goa Pioneers Mental Health Care with IMPRESS Program

visrane • Follow

visrane The IMPRESS program has significantly transformed depression care in Goa, training 87 healthcare workers in collaboration with the Directorate of Health Services (DHS) and Sangath. This initiative has led to the screening of over 74,000 patients across the state, improving mental health services and ensuring timely intervention for those in need. By equipping healthcare workers with the necessary skills and knowledge, the program has strengthened the overall mental health infrastructure in Goa, making quality care more accessible to its residents. #TheGoaModel

16w

dilipgaonkar271 🍌🍌🍌🍌🍌🍌

16w Reply

353 likes
June 3

Intramural Grants

Project Name	National Level Consultation Workshop on Climate Crisis and Mental Health
Project Duration	January 2023 to 30th September 2024
Project PI/Lead	Nidhi Joshi, (HAP Supervisor) Dr Anant Bhan (Site PI, and Mentor, Sangath Bhopal)
Project Location	Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

About the project

The climate crisis poses an escalating threat, with states like Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Maharashtra facing extreme weather events, impacting vulnerable communities, especially marginalized groups such as slum dwellers and laborers. Current policies lack a mental health and human rights approach. A national consultation workshop has been proposed to bring together government, academia, civil society, and media to set an agenda for research, advocacy, and collaborative action, emphasizing mental health integration in climate response strategies.

Key achievements/outputs

- We have successfully organized a one-day National Level Stakeholder Consultation and Agenda-Setting Workshop on the 22nd of March 2024 in Bhopal. This workshop has 2 important panel discussions with key speakers from NIMHANS, SEWA, UNICEF, PRADAAN, NHM, EPCO, AIGGPA, UNDP, APU, NLU, HCWH and Media.
- As a follow-up of the networking in the national consultation, we were invited by the NHM Madhya Pradesh to jointly organize one more workshop with different key departments, in the last leg of September.

Project Name	DRISHTi Social Issues in Health Research
Project Duration	April 2023 – May 2024
Project PI/Lead	Gauri Mahajan, Salik Ansari, Harikeerthan Raghuram, Anant Bhan (mentor)
Project Location	India

About the project

A 6-week online course for health researchers, which aims to enhance their knowledge of social science concepts and their application in the field, to make their work more contextually appropriate and socially beneficial. Contains 6 modules across topics of relevance of social issues in health research, marginalization and intersectionality, positionality and reflexivity, and diverse social identities in health research.

Key achievements/outputs

- Developed an outline, coordinated with faculty, recorded and edited lectures for an e-course on Social Issues in Health Research, covering 6 modules with faculty across diverse professional and lived experiences.
- The range of topics covered in the course included:
 - Introduction to social issues in health research
 - Marginalization & Intersectionality
 - Diverse social identities in health research
 - Diverse SOGIESC experiences in health research

- Disability in health research
- Positionality and Reflexivity as a researcher
- Conducted extensive outreach of the course over social media. It also featured in an ethics-focussed newsletter.
- Launched and successfully completed 1 cohort of the course, with 65 participants. 4 live webinars were conducted as a part of the course. The course was received well, and a lot of positive reviews were shared.

Project Name	Training on Peripartum disorders for frontline workers
Project Duration	June'23 to Dec'24
Project PI/Lead	Ankita Shah (PI), Dr Anant Bhan (Co-I)
Project Location	Gujarat

About the project

The project is a training awareness program on perinatal disorders for frontline workers where we aim to increasing awareness among frontline healthcare providers about the signs and symptoms of peripartum disorders, that will help them to identify the affected mother and child in the community and possibly refer them to appropriate healthcare providers for further evaluation and treatment

Key achievements/outputs

- Content of the training program has been developed
- Location of the project implementation has been finalised

Project Name	The adventures of Monkey Dori: An online game about dating violence for adolescents in India
Project Duration	2023 to 2024
Project PI/Lead	Devika Gupta, Abhijit Nadkarni
Project Location	Goa

About the project

To respond to some of these challenges faced by young people, we developed 'The adventures of Monkey Dori' an online game young people in India to increase their awareness about unhealthy and abusive behaviours that are normalized in dating relationships, and provide them with tools to make healthier decisions, communicate their emotions better, and resolve conflicts respectfully

Key achievements/outputs

- Through our research with college students, teachers and counsellors, we found that:
 - Adolescents in Goa started dating around the age of 15 years, and most hid their relationship status from their parents and teachers.
 - Many were physically or emotionally hurt by their partners, who also controlled and monitored their friendships and online activity.
 - Some young people had been coerced into sexual activities, such as sending nude pictures to their partners.
 - There was limited understanding of what constitutes "violence", and some acts of emotional violence and control (especially those happening online) were considered normal.
 - They reported reaching out for help only when the situation had escalated.