

COVID-19 Patient Support Fund

How has ARTH responded to the Covid-19 pandemic in its area? (see chart below)

ARTH has responded by volunteering its community based staff to assist government effort in the area -- this involves door to door screening of villages to identify migrants who have recently returned from urban hot spots like Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Surat, screening them for Coronavirus symptoms, advising and tracking home quarantine on their part. In addition, field workers are educating community members (2-3 persons at a time from a distance, no groups) on how to prevent Covid through personal precautions. Field staff playing this role are equipped with personal protection -- masks, sanitizers and personalized transport. Secondly, ARTH has abolished drug and medication charges at its rural health clinics so that families facing acute poverty due to the pandemic can access virtually free services. This is especially important for tribal communities that rely on wage labour and lack the savings to tide through a lock down. Based on assessment of nutritional needs of pregnant and recently delivered women, ARTH is additionally charting a plan to ensure supplementary nutrition from government sources or through direct food provision. Hence families of our field area will continue to receive primary care during the pandemic. In the coming months even after the lock down ends, we expect some restrictions to continue and the economic impact of Covid to hit the poor very hard. It will therefore be of vital importance to continue providing reproductive, maternal, newborn and child care services, as well as care for the mentally ill and the elderly, while continuing to protect our staff from Covid.

We therefore appeal for contributions from friends and well wishers to offset the added costs of dealing with the Covid pandemic. Whatever you contribute will add to a Patient Support Fund to enable poor and marginalized sections of the community access basic health care at nominal or no cost.

For more information or clarifications, please write to arth@arth.in or WhatsApp +91 9461207001.

Know more about ARTH (video documentary, 15 min) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NnLtvRNlmRs>

