

ADOPT A VILLAGE REPORT

India has nearly 700,000 villages and approximately 68 percent of the population live in villages. The majority of rural population has no access to healthcare. Needless to say, there is no concept of preventive healthcare in India, especially in remote parts of the country. American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) has embarked on a Rural Health Initiative to provide free screening for non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, chronic kidney disease, anemia, hypoxemia and malnutrition. Under the leadership of AAPI president Dr. Anupama Gotimukula, we will be doing the screening in 75 villages to commemorate 75 years of India's independence.

AAPI is collaborating with Global Teleclinics (GTC) to carry out this project in 5 states including Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Telangana. It will be expanded to other states in India eventually. The tests will include CBC, HbA1C, lipid profile, creatinine, pulse oximetry, measurement of blood pressure, height and weight. 150-200 people are screened in each village in one day. There is an opportunity to screen a total of up to 15,000 people in 75 villages across 5 states. Patients are given healthy snacks, multi vitamin tablets, and paracetamol as needed for pain, on site. The cost for screening per one village is \$2,500.



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A sponsor suggests a village of his or her interest and finds a person in the village to co-ordinate with collaborating company, GTC. The village champion is responsible for inviting people to be screened. Sponsor pays money to AAPI, a 501(c)3 organization. Once the venue, date, and time have been decided, GTC personnel will go to the village to do the testing. If there is an abnormal result, GTC will have a physician do a televisit for counselling or try to refer the patient to a physician in the vicinity for further evaluation and treatment.

The virtual launch of the program was held on August 27th, 2021 in the presence of all 5 Consult Generals of India in the US. I had an opportunity to be present and inaugurate the program in Ramaiah Palle Village in the state of Telangana, in October 2021. We have done health screenings in more than 15 villages in 2 states since then. We are gathering data from all the villages which may be useful in improving healthcare in India. Our eventual goal is to collaborate with non-governmental organizations to provide medicines and ongoing camps in these 75 villages.



SATHEESH KATHULA, MD, FACP
Chair, Adopt a Village Committee
Secretary, AAPI