

Human interest stories - The impact of KMF



A tale of two sisters

Rasathi* and Muniamal* are sisters from an Irula community about 25 kms from the hospital. They studied till middle school and had to discontinue to help their parents as daily wage workers to provide for the family. Rasathi got married and soon after lost her first baby close to term. She became pregnant again and was pre-eclamptic but she refused to go to the hospital as she was referred to Ooty and then Coimbatore.

Meanwhile, Muniamal had delivered a healthy baby boy Ramesh* ,at the government hospital but she suffered from post-partum depression. 45 days after birth Ramesh weight had dropped from 2.2 kgs. He was severely malnourished, with failure to thrive. They both also had scabies. Susan, our optometrist with a heart for the community, had heard of their situation and informed our team that mobilized them and was able to bring them in a week later. It took some convincing because she was initially very hesitant to get treatment of any kind. Ramesh was admitted in the Neonatal ICU of KMF Hospital and was started on 2 hourly feeds and supportive treatment.

Muniamal was started on anti-depressants and nutritious food; she got better in a few days and her mother also helped to attend to Ramesh who was admitted for 2 weeks in the Neonatal ICU. She gradually became better with the treatment and was also able to feed her son by herself. Ramesh slowly gained weight, his overall condition improved and we finally took the family back home.

Meanwhile Rasathi also delivered a healthy baby boy at home; however she was extremely anaemic and needed 2 units of blood. This was another struggle as our hospital does not have a blood storage unit and they were not comfortable with being referred to any facility nearby. However, after much mobilization she was admitted in the government hospital in Mettupalayam and got better. Both mothers and children are doing well. It was a joy to the entire team to see the family in good health.

It is often a challenge to ensure good healthcare to those in remote villages. The hilly terrain, vast distances and financial deprivation are just some causes, compounded further by a lack of understanding regarding the need for seeking healthcare when required. We are thankful to those who donated towards the charity fund and the Neonatal ICU which helped us to provide much needed care to these families.