

GiftAbleD Concept Paper for Health Program for Women with Disability

Brief about GiftAbleD:

GiftAbleD Foundation was formed in 2013 as a Public Charitable Trust. GiftAbleD is a thought that we all can live with dignity. People with Disability may not fit into typical societal norms or silos due to their physical limitation. However, that should not be considered a reason to portray them fit only for charity. They can and will contribute towards building a just, sensitive and healthy society. To start looking at their Abilities – They are GiftAbleD!!!

GiftAbleD strives to create an ecosystem of like-minded individuals and collectively build a disabled-friendly society. We aim to empower individuals with disabilities across crucial aspects of their life, and have designed several services with this aim in mind.

Justification for quality health program for women with disability:

Disability is extremely diverse. While some health conditions associated with disability result in poor health and extensive health care needs, others do not. However all people with disability have the same general health care needs as everyone else, and therefore need access to mainstream health care services. Article 25 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) reinforces the right of persons with disability to attain the highest standard of health care, without discrimination.

Women with visual or hearing impairment, tend to ignore their body's health and they are less likely to consult a gynecologist due to social and culture stigma. The cost of health care is also another reason that deters them from seeking medical help. This makes them prone to infectious diseases. There is a need to bridge this gap and increase the social interconnectedness for effective sustainability and health of disabled women. Unfortunately, these women are given misrepresented facts about menstrual and maternal health.

The maternal healthcare services designed to meet the needs of women without disability might lack the flexibility and responsiveness to meet the unique maternity care needs of women with disabilities. The right to health for all, as well as to attain the maternal health-related Millennium Development Goals, resources must be proactively allocated to support the most vulnerable and underserved segments like women with disability. Findings suggest that although women with disability do want to receive institutional maternal healthcare, their disability often makes it difficult to access skilled care, as well as to unfriendly physical health infrastructure. Other related access challenges include:

- Healthcare providers' insensitivity and lack of knowledge about maternity care needs of women with disability,
- Negative attitudes of service providers and health information that lacks specificity in terms of addressing the special maternity care needs of women with disability.

GiftAbleD is trying to make an effective change in the way disabled women receive health care in the society. We sought to understand the challenges faced by these women and initiated some life changing projects to resolve the issues. The approach will be to adapt best practices to reach out to health needs of women with disabilities in the rural and remote parts of India.

Vision: *To foster a culture that values Inclusion, while creating opportunities and transforming lives of People with Disabilities so that they can live with dignity and self-esteem through Impact Programs*

Project Goal: Ensure access to quality health care for 1 million disabled women by 2025.

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Project Objectives:

1. Educating 50,000+ women with disability by 2025 on menstrual, maternal, breast and general health
2. Sensitizing the faculty of hospitals and medical centers through workshops
3. Access suitable and relevant technology to ensure efficient health care reach for Women with Disability

Impact:

1. Understanding menstrual, maternal, general health and disease prevention concepts.
2. Know how to access valid health information, products, and services.
3. Access to quality health care through digital platform
4. In-built sustainability through trained grassroots level functionaries
5. Develop positive health behaviors
6. Become advocates for good individual, family, and community health

Implementation Strategy:

The health program includes disability-related cultural competence training for healthcare providers, making healthcare facilities more disability-friendly as well as an emphasis on patient-centered care and behaviour change strategies for healthcare providers and the general public. Interventions related to provision of free or subsidized disability-friendly transport services to address mobility challenges as well as incentive schemes to boost social support for women with disability who need or desire to access and use skilled maternal healthcare services at health facilities is critical. GiftAbleD, hence, believes in enabling the existing systems rather than reinventing the wheel. To scale up the program effectively we will:

1. Identify NGO partners working with individuals with disability to implement the health program.
2. Sensitizing physicians, nurses and other faculty in the hospitals and clinics
3. Using technology to ensure efficient health care for Women with Disability and to improve maternal and child care through Anganwadi workers, ANM and ASHA workers
4. Develop Front Line health service (Community Based) through partner NGOs who will be equipped with necessary trainings and usage of health apps for effective monitoring
5. Provision of rehabilitation and therapies through surgeries, aids and appliances through government schemes