



# The Banyan and BALM Monthly Update November 2009

## OVERALL FIGURES FOR THE BANYAN

THE BANYAN PROJECTS	OCTOBER		NOVEMBER	
	PSYCHIATRIC OUTPATIENT	PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENT	PSYCHIATRIC OUTPATIENT	PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENT
ADAIKALAM	98	198	-	203
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMME	224	11	332	7
URBAN MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMME	268	-	253	-
COMMUNITY LIVING PROJECT	-	58	-	47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>257</b>

Note: The urban mental health programme does not have a psychiatric inpatient facility.

**ADAIKALAM**  
Co-ordinator: Ms Vanitha

	October	November
Currently houses	198	203
Admission	-	-
Readmission	2	10
Hospitalisation	-	1
Expired	-	-
Residents referred to Transit Vocational Training		
Residents in Growth Lab	3	4
Residents referred to Growth Lab	2	-
Number attending OP	98	-

**Activities**

- Health Care Workers class on classifications of Mental Illness by Harini.
- Dr. Shanthu from SAHEAL foundation conducted an Art therapy session for 30 residents.
- Adaikalam professionals attended a lecture on psychosomatic illness by Dr. Shanthu.
- 2 residents employed outside of Adaikalam in Mogappair.
- Visits to Puzhal prison continued with a follow up done on existing patients and screening done on other inmates. A talk was given to female prisoners to attempt to motivate them in their future life.

## COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

Co-ordinator: Ms Porkodi

	October	November
No. of clients (General OP) at the Health Centre	729	694
No. of new referrals to Health Centre	107	68
No. of clients at Psychiatric OP	224	332
No. of referrals at Psychiatric OP*	26	20
No. of Psychiatric Inpatients in the Health Centre	11	7

### Highlights

- 32 home visits have been done on this month
- 28 were routine follow up home visits
- 2 care givers meeting conducted with the Clients.
- 3 Propaganda/Awareness program conducted at Karanai. Thandarai and Kolathur
- New Area visit done one at Karanai and Thandarai
- First Alcoholics Anonymous meeting took place on the 28th of November at the Health Center.

### Plans for next month

- Plans to recruit staff for running Vocational activities in the Day care centre for clients of The Banyan.
- Setting up of a Gym and a Meditation center in the Health Center premises.
- The Second meeting for Alcoholics Anonymous meeting will be held in the Health Center.
- Proposal to upscale the Daycare center is being made to run it successfully.
- Follow up of the World Mental Health Day Program - Benefits for the patients - Client driven Advocacy
- To reach out to more Panchayat leaders in order to enable them to support the cause of access to care.
- More employment opportunities to be created for the clients.
- Meeting with Employers of our clients.
- Formalize referral services to NIEPMD.

## **URBAN COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**Team: Chaitali Shetty, Danya, Punitha, Poongothai & Volunteers**

	No. of OP clients- October	No. of OP clients (NEW) - October	No. of OP clients - November	No. of OP clients (NEW) - November
Loyola College	191	17	152	12
KK Nagar	77	8	84	5

### **Highlights:**

- Disability Allowance Meeting on November 15, 2009.
- Kitchen garden started in the day care centre and visits of Kottivakkam.

Stress Management training for the Police (railway Protection Force) at ICF on 13.11.09. This is a community programme organized by The Banyan and D.G. Vaishnavi College First Year MSWgraduate Preethi Priyadharshini in collaboration with the Railway Protection Force. The programme is called 'Mental Health & Stress Management'. The main objective is to help the RPF personnel to deal with stress in their jobs and reduce the incidence of mental illness amongst this population.

The Chief Security Commissioner (CSC) of ICF (Integral Coach Factory) gave the Presidential Address and Mr. Meganathan held a discussion on the topic. The RPF Personnel were split into groups to continue their discussions, guided by the The Banyan's Junior Coordinator. They were directed towards the Group discussion on what stresses them, the causes that could make them stress-out with their family, in the workplace and thinking about potential consequences of these triggers.

Many issues came up in the workshop and Mr. Meganathan worked with the staff to find solutions to their problems.

### **Plans for next month**

- Disability Allowance Meeting on December 20, '09.
- Spandan inter-college competition
- World AIDS condolence day programme along with the Balwadi workers.
- SHG women's Workshop on Mental health Issues on December 23, 2009.
- Participating in the human chain on World Disability day.

## **COMMUNITY LIVING PROJECT**

**Co-ordinator: Ms SUVARNA SHREYAS**

	October	November
Total number of residents	58	47
Admissions from Adaikalam	-	-
Total number reintegrated into the community	-	12
Number employed in the community	-	2
Number expected to be reintegrated next month	5	-

### **Highlights:**

- Regular groups and therapy session being conducted for women who have now moved in to the community and also insight building is being done in an innovative manner.
- Human rights committee was formed and a meeting was held for the same. The committee consists of key members from the community across various cross sections, namely Panchayat head Mr. Janaki Raman, Ward member Mrs. Padmavathy and Afsali, CRDS supervisor Fathima, Kovalam SHG Head Jayapriya. All of the above members were present for the meeting that was held on the 26<sup>th</sup> November. Two of the women in the PC came with their grievances which are being worked on.
- Goodie bags for all staff of The Banyan are being prepared for Christmas
- Few residents were taken to visit Dakshina Chitra for a learning visit.
- Pickles were prepared and sold in the petty shop and shops in the Kovalam community
- The paid Security (male) has been removed from PC during the day time. Our resident Subbamma working as a lady security in our protected community in the day time
- Nearly 15 residents are going to the Day Care Center at CMHP to do their daily OT activity.

### **Plans for next month:**

- 5 vacancies have been created in the PC this month - to be filled in the coming month.
- More employment opportunities to be generated for residents into the community
- Home visits to be done for 2 residents the coming month
- Increase gardening activity
- 3 more women to be shifted into the Kovalam community.
- More focus on Vocational Training activities in PC.

# **BANYAN ACADEMY OF LEADERSHIP in MENTAL HEALTH—BALM**

Co-ordinator: Ms Madhu Sharan

## **Highlights:**

1. BALM Organised the 3rd BALM & UCL Course on 'Recent Advances in Cultural Psychiatry for South Asia,' from November 9 -11, 09 at IFMR, Chennai

### **Topics centred on:**

1) Recent advances in Medical Anthropology as applied to South Asian Psychiatry, 2) Impact of cultural identity, migration and 'notions of home' on mental health 3) Update on a) 'Culture Bound Syndromes', b) Culture & Pharmacology c) 'Creative therapies' in South Asia, 4) Clinical skills in application of Social Science theory to the practice of Psychiatry in South Asia.

Faculty comprised from UCL, BALM and The Banyan.

A total of 35 participants comprising psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, psychiatric social workers and clinical practitioners in mental health from NGO and public health sector from across the world including Germany, Canada, Sweden, UAE, USA, UK and Australia participated and enlivened the discussions with their rich and varied knowledge, experience and expertise.

It was an engaging experience with fresh learnings, valuable insights which emerged from the teaching, break away sessions and also from the lively interactions and discussions that followed each session.

**2. BALM-UCL Research Unit:** The last day (before team UCL left) was spent discussing future research projects and course curriculum on mental health as part of the **BALM & UCL research Unit.**

BALM -UCL Research Unit is nested within BALM office at Chennai and jointly directed by Dr Sushrut Jadhav (Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry, UCL) & Madhu Sharan (Director, BALM). The research faculty include a multi-disciplinary team of medical anthropologists, clinical academic mental health professionals, and social scientists; from BALM & UCL.

**Outcome:** The Unit aims at submitting a minimum of 2 joint research grant applications and 2 publications by the end of the proposed period. It is intended that the subsequent life of the research unit will be supported through external funding for research. Findings generated from such research will also feed into future UCL-BALM teaching course content. This is in keeping with the overall objective of generating locally valid mental health theory for the marginalised population.

Lalit Narayan, a participant of the last two courses, who is a medical doctor, will be hired for 6 months to carry out the research on the 3 Pilot projects, namely.

1. *Narratives of Recovery and Return of the Homeless Mentally Ill Women*

2. *Stigmatisation of Severe Mental Illness amongst rural and urban population of Tamil Nadu*
3. *Impact Assessment of the UCL - BALM Collaboration 2008-2009*

3. BALM organised a SEMINAR on 'Role of Faith Healing in Mental Health Care', on November 12, 09.

Topics covered were:

- Mental health in India - Cultural and historical perspectives
- Faith healing as a form of psychiatric treatment
- Case studies of people who have only accessed faith healing practices.
- Case studies of people who have accessed faith healing practices, as well as allopathic psychiatric treatment.

**Speakers comprised of:** Dr. Anup Dhar, Psychiatrist, Centre for the Study of Culture and Society; Dr. O M. Somasundaram, Former Medical Superintendent, IMH; Dr. K. S Jacob, Professor of Psychiatry, CMC, Vellore; Miles Hamlai, Director, The Altruist, Gujarat, Dr. Brigitte Sebastia, French Institute of Pondicherry; Dr. Harish Naraindas, Prof of Sociology, JNU, N Delhi; Prof Roland Littlewood, UCL; Dr Sushrut Yadav, UCL; Mr. Allahudin, Healer, Kovalam; P.L Porkodi, Project Director, The Banyan.

Apart from these, there were clients of The Banyan who access faith healing at Kovalam Durgah and Hanumanthapuram temple, Tamil Nadu

**Participants comprised** all those who were present at the BALM & UCL course and several clients, care givers and members of the 'Adaikalam,' and CMHP project of The Banyan. The seminar was a huge success in terms of valuable learnings, sound perspectives and very participative discussions.

4. **'Rally for Recovery'**: To increase awareness on mental illness, BALM & The Banyan, in cooperation with Asha International, organized the **'Rally for Recovery', on November 20, 09**. The venue was Asha Nivas, Rutland Gate, Nungambakkam, and Chennai.
5. **Research at BALM** is currently ongoing in 4 study projects:
  - a) The impact of the Disability Allowance of The Banyan on 're-integrated clients' and their families in and around Chennai.
  - b) Interlinkages between mental health and employment: A case study of socio-economically disadvantaged outpatient clients of The Banyan.
  - c) 'Self-help groups as alternative Models of Rehabilitation of Persons with Mental Health Issues - a case study of SHGs formed by the Banyan.'
  - d) Continued work has been done on the **'Study of rehabilitated ex-residents of The Banyan in South India'**.

6. **Replication of The Banyan or Alternate Model of Mental Health Services in Chhattisgarh:** The Banyan was approached by The Dept of Women and Child, Govt of



Chhattisgarh to enable them to expand their outreach in providing mental health services in Chhattisgarh.

This was followed by a visit of a team comprising Mr Sunil Sharma and Ms. Christina, Assistant Joint Director (s), Dept of WCD from Chhattisgarh to The Banyan, Chennai, on November 22 and 23<sup>rd</sup>. The team visited all projects of The Banyan and held discussions with the senior team of The Banyan.

- i) Two joint discussions were held with the senior management team on the model of mental health services to be implemented in Chhattisgarh and the roll-out strategy.
- ii) As a step forward, it was agreed that The Banyan would submit a proposal highlighting the overview of the collaboration and the possible types of services that could be provided by the Govt of Chhattisgarh.
- iii) This would be followed by a visit of a senior team from The Banyan to Raipur to understand the existing nature and types of mental health services available at Chhattisgarh and interact and discuss with Govt officials on fine-tuning /expanding provision of mental health services in the State.

The proposal was submitted on November 25, 09 and a team comprising Ms Vandana Gopikumar, Founder and Managing Trustee of The Banyan, Ms Madhu Sharan, and Director of The Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health (BALM) and Ms P. L. Porkodi, Director of Community Mental Health Project of The Banyan would be visiting Chhattisgarh to take forward the discussions.

**7. BALM & IFMR Partnership:** The third session with the 1<sup>st</sup> year MBA students at Institute of Financial Management and Research (IFMR) was held on November 14, 09.

Madhu Sharan, Director of BALM addressed the students on the topic of ‘State and Social Change in India.’ The talk focussed on the philosophy and salient features of The Indian Constitution and how the Constitution itself is an agent of Social Change; Concept of a Welfare State; Role of State in Social Change including the role of legislation, planning; Socio-economic gaps in development and way forward.

**8. Session on ‘Working with distressed children and Adolescents,’ by Dr. David Goldberg (MRCP, MRC Psych, MSc, SocAnthrop), on November 14, 2009.** This was organised for the Banyan staff at The Banyan Centre Office, Spurtank Road for experiential learning, discussions and application of knowledge.

**9. Volunteers at The Banyan & BALM in November 2009 were:**

**Liz and Laurence** from the UK have continued their work at Adaikalam in improving quality of care and training of health care workers respectively. Their fresh inputs and ideas have been very valuable for the team at Adaikalam.

**Catherine** from Australia finished her time as a volunteer in November. She has been very helpful in the OP clinics in Loyola as well as in the Day Care Centre. Her inputs as a psychiatric social worker have been very valuable.

**Aditi** continues her work at the CMHP and has started workshops with women in Kovalam to work with their life stories as narratives.

**Lucy**, a final year medical student from the UK, is assisting the team in Kovalam at the OP clinics as well as assisting Aditi in the narratives workshops.

A special mention should be made of **Anna**, who has been with The Banyan since February and has been an immense help with various kinds of work. The new website is now live thanks to her hard work. She has also helped out the team immensely in writing proposals, letters, applications for awards and grants and documenting seminars. In the last few months, she has also been very involved in the work of the Day Care Centre, where she helped establish the vegetable garden and other activities.

Now that Anna has to return to the UK, The Banyan and BALM would like to thank Anna for all the work she has done. We will greatly miss her cheerful presence and positivity around the organisation!

BALM is thankful to the volunteers for their time and expertise to The Banyan and BALM.