

Best Practice 1:

ASHWAS

ASHWAS (Activist for the Service of **H**uman **W**elfare and **A**ltruism to **S**ociety) is Ansar Women's College's outreach Programme flourished in line with the institution's Vision and Mission. **ASHWAS** aims at Moulding Socially Responsible Citizen

Objectives and Principles: This practice, which is built on the concept of 'Classroom to the Community' is designed with the following intended outcomes.

- To fulfil the Vision and Mission of the institution
- To make the students aware of the community in which they work and their relation to the community.
- To make the students aware of their obligation to the society, especially the weaker section.
- To enable the students to identify the needs and problems of the community and involve in problem solving process.
- To create a sense of social and civic responsibility in students.
- **ASHWAS** develop competence required for group-living and sharing of responsibility.
- To gain skills in mobilizing community participation with leadership qualities and democratic attitude.

The Context: Education is not just acquiring knowledge and obtaining degrees and recognition but using the knowledge gained for the benefit of the society at large. Social responsibility and inclusiveness form an integral part of the graduation process. Instilling social responsibility in students help them to realize their potential and turn it to their own benefit and for the benefit of the society. Cancer and other Non-Communicable Diseases have emerged as major public health problem in our society. When chronic or life-threatening illnesses strike, it is a crippling blow for the victims and their families. Therefore, a crucial need for a system of care at home that can best be built by a community-based palliative care movement. It is in this context Pain and Palliative Care Unit and Student Relief Wing (**ASHWAS**) was established. **ASHWAS** is always in the forefront of inculcating social values

among students by the organizing various activities that benefit the neighbouring community and society at large.

The Practice: Ansar Women's College enthusiastically implements its activities through ASHWAS club. The Club has been created to cater to the interests of the students to hone their life skills. Exhibitions and Food fests are organized to raise funds which are distributed to the inmates of orphanages, old age homes and to the widows and destitute. Food, clothes, and blankets are distributed to the poor. The institution waives fee and allows payment of fee in instalments to the needy students. Students' force is used to help the society in natural calamities. Conducted workshops, awareness sessions, blood donation camps. etc.

- The Club members conducted a campaign 'Let's Fight Against Cancer' and visited the houses of cancer patients along with home care team of various Palliative Units and extended physical and financial help.
- Students regularly involved in Blood Donation.
- They rendered a helping hand to the people of Kerala and Chennai when they were affected by the flood. Medicines, dresses and Kitchen utensils were donated.
- Awareness sessions on 'Role of Students in Palliative Care', 'Breast cancer'...etc. were conducted and an amount was collected by the students and donated to a Kidney patient, Cancer patients having financial difficulty for medical treatment.
- An amount was collected and donated under the project "***Palliative Kudumbangalkku Viddhyarthikalude Kythangu***" (Student Support for Afflicted Families).
- Students also involved in Home care with other Palliative units.
- Construction of Houses: Many of the patients and their families and homeless. To address the problem ASHWAS and NSS volunteers collected money from the students and supported in constructing their houses.
- A scheme named "***Changathikoru Kaithangu***" (A Friend in Need) was executed to pay the semester fee of needy students.
- 'One Man's Trash, Other's Treasure': Materials collected by the students under this project was handed over to the Goodwill store of Alpha Palliative Care Unit, Thrissur.
- '***Padheyam project***' (Food kit distribution) helped to eradicate poverty in the locality to a great extent.

- ASHWAS members visited orphanages and distributed groceries and donated clothes at regular intervals.
- Students visited Blind Schools in the locality and provided support to install advanced software for their studies.
- Members visited Kottol Nayadi Colony, adopted village of NSS, in connection with festivals like Onam, Ramadan and Christmas and distributed groceries. The health awareness programmes raised awareness on health and hygiene. Severe health issues reported by club members are referred to Ansar Hospital with the support of the management.

5. Evidence of Success:

There is a mechanism to get feedback from the students and the beneficiaries. Such feedbacks are indicative of the attitudinal changes in the students with reference to community issues. The beneficiaries and local community members also testify that the interaction and the support of the students have improved their life. The club collaborates with NGOs and other Government Organisations that play a complementary role for the effective implementation of the projects for the benefit of the Community.

The Club received special appreciation from Pain and Palliative Club, Kunnankulam and Amala Fellowship for the meritorious services.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

One of the biggest issues that our students face is Time. Visit of the students for home care is not a continuous process due to their busy academic schedule. Extreme financial burdens, and lasting psychological issues of patients and their families are increasing day by day. The current economic climate is making it more difficult for our students to find adequate funding.