# Abbott To Upgrade 75 Primary Health Centres Across India, Providing Quality, Accessible Care To 2.5 Million People

- Abbott has partnered with Americares India Foundation to upgrade 75 Primary Health Centres (PHCs) to Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) across nine states in India
- Sixteen PHCs have already been upgraded
- This will benefit over 2.5 million people annually across Maharashtra, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, and Jharkhand

MUMBAI, India, 23 November 2022 - Global healthcare company Abbott has committed to upgrading 75 Primary Health Centres (PHCs) to Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) across nine States in India in partnership with Americares India Foundation, a health-focused relief and development organization. The HWC program, supported by an Abbott grant of about Rs 200 million (U.S.$2.4 million), will serve over 2.5 million people from under-resourced communities every year. These centres are vital to support the government's *Ayushman Bharat* initiative, advancing access to affordable, quality healthcare equitably across the population.

The HWC program is part of Abbott's commitment to further itsglobal sustainability priority of innovating for access and affordability in health. Currently, Abbott and Americares have upgraded 16 PHCs across Maharashtra, Goa, Himachal Pradesh and Chhattisgarh as part of its first phase, serving over 500,000 people. They plan to upgrade the remaining 59 PHCs across the four mentioned states along with Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand by early 2024.

HWCs strengthen India's primary healthcare system to advance access to care and support local communities. This also will support and tackle immense health threats and lessen the country's burden of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), which account for roughly 61% of all deaths in India.[i]

The initiative has three core objectives – to upgrade local PHCs to HWCs, drive capacity building for healthcare workers, and improve community awareness around NCDs and infectious diseases. By expanding access to services across prevention, treatment and care, low-income populations can benefit from improved awareness of health and wellness, greater access and timely care, leading to better health outcomes.

Jasraj Virdi, Global Citizenship and Sustainability Director, Abbott, said, "In line with our2030 Global Sustainability Plan, we intend to expand affordable access to healthcare by delivering innovative, decentralized models of care that advance prevention and early diagnosis, and provide quality treatment and care. Strengthening local health centres to be well equipped to meet community healthcare needs is a step in this direction. And these centres will also play an integral role in supporting the government's health initiatives to ensure the delivery of quality primary healthcare that is affordable, equitable and sustainable."

Shripad Desai, MD & Country Director, Americares India Foundation, commented, "Upgrading primary health centres to promote holistic health and wellness is critical today to support India's Ayushman Bharat initiative and help improve healthcare delivery. Working with Abbott, we aim to continue shaping the future of quality healthcare and community building across the country."

**Strengthening holistic care and infrastructure with PHC upgradation efforts**

PHCs often serve as the first point of contact for local communities within the nation's health system. Upgradation to HWCs helps these centres better serve people's healthcare needs throughout their lifetime. Upgradation efforts enhance reproductive, maternal and neonatal health service readiness.

Other key focus areas include NCD and infectious disease screening and management, emergency medical services, ophthalmology, disabled friendly services, and more. This ensures greater attention to holistic and preventive care. Abbott also aims to promote community-wide health-seeking behaviours like early diagnosis and treatment alongside lifestyle measures by improving awareness around key communicable and infectious diseases, and providing access to quality healthcare infrastructure.

The program will provide essential medical instruments including ECG machines and equipment for maternal, neonatal, respiratory and eye care, and will strengthen key infrastructure and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions. This includes enhancing access to safe drinking water and separate, clean toilets for males and females. WASH interventions are critical to safeguard the health of communities and prevent further infections.

Abbott and Americares India Foundation are also providing access to on-site training and capacity building for healthcare workers, village health sanitation, nutrition committee (VHNSC) members and Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers on health and safety practices, including NCDs and infectious diseases.

Overall, this initiative can advance access to healthcare, provide and optimize needed resources, and help lessen the burden on healthcare facilities at the secondary and tertiary levels.

**About Americares India Foundation**

Americares India Foundation is a public charitable trust, registered in 2006. Americares India is a health-focused relief and development organization that responds to people affected by poverty or disaster with life-changing health programs, medicine and medical supplies. When disaster, poverty, disease, or policy causes health crises, we deliver medicines, medical supplies and humanitarian aid to a trusted network of NGOs, hospitals and health care providers across India. We also create and

support programs that increase capacity, improve quality and provide access to health care for underprivileged populations across India.

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**About Abbott**

Abbott is a global healthcare leader that helps people live more fully at all stages of life. Our portfolio of life-changing technologies spans the spectrum of healthcare, with leading businesses and products in diagnostics, medical devices, nutritionals and branded generic medicines. Our 113,000 colleagues serve people in more than 160 countries. In India, Abbott was established in 1910, and is one of the country's oldest and most admired healthcare companies. With over 12,000 employees in the country, Abbott in India is helping to meet the healthcare needs of consumers, patients and doctors throughout urban and rural India.

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[i] https://www.nhp.gov.in/healthlyliving/ncd2019

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