

# PHOTO NARRATIVE OF GERIATRIC CAMPS

Trans Singela Area, Khaltse Block Leh  
Ladakh, Kashmir, India

**SM KADRI**

**U**nder the National Programme for Health Care of Elderly (NPHCE), geriatric camps were conducted at six villages and hamlets in the Trans Singela area of Khaltse Block, Leh Ladakh from August 01 2013 to August 11, 2013.

The Trans Singela area is a region across the Singela Pass. Situated 17,000 feet above sea level, the area contains around 6 small villages and hamlets that are isolated for half the year. The population of the Trans Singela area is very small and accessibility is very difficult. A team normally has to journey for 7 to 9 days under arduous conditions to get through the passes, though a road is currently being constructed to help with accessibility under PMGSY, the nationwide plan in India to provide roads to isolated populations.

Health care facilities in the Singela Pass comprise of one primary health centre and four sub-centres. Though some healthcare workers work in these facilities, doctors have never been posted. Due to the harsh climate and difficult terrain, the people living in the area have been deprived of quality health care.

Because of the need to provide healthcare for all populations, this Geriatric Health camp was planned to provide different specialist services to the six villages of Singela Pass.



SINGELA Pass (17000 feet)

**August 1, 2013** We reached Photksar Village (population: 235) at around noon. The health camp was held in the afternoon, where we examined and treated 131 patients.

**August 2, 2013**

We reached Yulchung Village (population: 144) at around 11:00 AM after crossing Singela pass. A camp was organized and 113 patients were treated.

BMO Khaltse, delivering health education session



Geriatric patient being given a walking stick

**August 3, 2013** We reached Neyrkas village (population: 104) at around 11:00 AM. Medical equipment, such as portable X-ray machines, ultrasound machines, and medication had to be carried on horseback or on back packs. A camp was organized there, and 47 patients were examined and treated. We returned to Yulchung village late in the evening.

**August 4, 2013**

We crossed Khupala pass to reach Skumpata village (pop: 100) at around noon. A camp was organized in the afternoon, where 53 patients were examined and treated.

The following services were provided during the camps:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Specialist Consultations                   | 7. ECG Machine   |
| 2. Screening under NCD (Blood sugar, BP, BMI) | 8. Vaccination including Pentavalent                             |
| 3. School Health check up                     | 9. Training of ASHAs and FMPHW in MCTS                           |
| 4. Lab tests including HbsAg and HIV testing  | 10. Family Welfare services (IUCD insertion, Condom, Oral pills) |
| 5. X-ray                                      | 11. Cataract screening   |
| 6. Ultrasound                                 | 12. Distribution of Aids and Appliances under NPHCE              |
|   | 13. Health Education and IEC                                     |



X-rays being used for the first time at Lingshed

In all 255, patients were seen by the specialist. It was for the first time in the history that a team from the health department had come with these equipment.

**August 5, 2013** Our next destination was Lingshed village. It was the biggest in the area with a population of 435 people. We reached Lingshed village at 10:00 AM, and a camp was organized in the afternoon.



Physiotherapist at work in Lingshed's temporary camp

**August 6, 2013** Due to the large population, the camp continued its stay in Lingshed.

First ECG and Ultrasound in Lingshed



This project was under the dynamic leadership of Director Health Services, Kashmir, India Dr. Saleem-ur-Rehman and co operation of State Surveillance officer Kashmir, India Dr. Rehana Kaunsar.

- The team comprised of
1. Dr Anwar, Orthopaedic surgeon
  2. Dr. Tsewang Namgyal, Surgeon
  3. Dr. Phunchok Angchuk, Ophthalmologist
  4. Dr. Lotos, Physician
  5. Dr. Kunzes, Gynaecologist
  6. Rinchen Angmo, Paediatrician
  7. Dr. Sonam Angmo, Pathologist

The team was under the overall supervision of Dr. Rinchen Chorol, BMO, Khaltse. We were also accompanied by technicians who assisted with the procedures.

First plaster at Lingshed being applied for a fracture





Geriatric patients at Dipling Village being treated by the camp

**August 7, 2013** The next destination was Dibling village (Pop:84). We reached Dibling after 13 hours of hiking.

**August 8, 2013** Due to the length of the journey, the camp had to be organized the next day. 50 patients were examined and treated.

**August 9, 2013**

An alternate route to Rangdum village in Kargil district had to be taken. This detour involved crossing Pigdongla pass and spending one night in open.

**August 11, 2013**

Finally, we reached Leh in the evening.

**August 10, 2013**

We reached Rangdum and drove up to Kargil.

