



Department of Health & Family Welfare  
Government of Odisha



Directorate of Nursing  
Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Odisha



**SATHYABAMA**  
INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)  
CATEGORY - 1 UNIVERSITY BY UGC

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## Report

### State Expert Consultation on Developing in-service CHO's Competency Assessment Framework in Primary Healthcare Setting in Odisha

16<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
Bhubaneswar, Odisha



## Contact CHO-CCT

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This report has been developed by Sathyabama College of Nursing, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology and Health Systems Transformation Platform (HSTP) to share the summary of proceedings of state expert consultation for developing Competency Assessment Framework for CHOs in primary healthcare settings in Odisha, held in Bhubaneswar on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

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**Background:**

In 2019, under Odisha Health Systems Strengthening Program, a four-year collaborative effort by the Health System Transformation Platform (HSTP) was initiated with the Government of Odisha, Tata Trusts, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. The collaborative effort intended to improve Odisha Health Systems to provide affordable and equitable access to quality care for its population while avoiding significant financial risks and improving citizen satisfaction. The collaborative health systems diagnostic study identified Primary Health Care Provider's competencies as an area that is to be improved.

Community Health Officers (CHOs) are non-physician health workers. They are appointed in the newly upgraded Health Sub-Centres (HSCs) known as Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) which cover the 3000-5000 population. The HWCs are envisioned to bring comprehensive primary healthcare services closer to community. Hence, strengthening this cadre competency would play a significant role in improving delivery of primary healthcare services and performances of HWCs. HSTP has collaborated with Sathyabama College of Nursing, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai to conduct a CHO's Competency Assessment in Odisha as a partner. Competency assessment is the first step towards development of any cadre within the health workforce and requires development of a comprehensive competency assessment tool. CHO Competency Collaborative Team collated and reviewed publicly available guidelines and advisories related to the roles and responsibilities of CHO (National Level – 3; State Governments: 10) to develop a comprehensive list of CHO's roles and responsibilities, and identified the role-based competencies.

The team organized the **first national expert consultation** to validate the competencies through seasoned experts on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2023 from 2.00 PM to 3.30 PM. After that, the team developed Competency Assessment Tools (CAT) and organized the **second national expert consultation** to validate the CAT and to collect the consensus for field testing on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023 from 11.00 AM to 12.30 PM.

**Key Objectives:**

**State Expert Consultation** was conducted on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023 with the objective of customizing the CHO's competencies and CHO-CAT<sup>1</sup> to the context of Odisha state. Moreover, through the consultation the team also expected the state stakeholders, national subject matter experts, state subject matter experts and CHO-CCT to validate the contents and approve the list of competencies and CAT tools collectively. During the meeting, the participants also discussed the importance of the competency assessment of CHOs and what refinements could help scale up this effort further to better the health outcomes for the people of Odisha.

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<sup>1</sup> Community Health Officers- Competency Assessment Tool

## Inaugural Session: Summary of Proceedings

### Inaugural Session

The inaugural session (see Photograph 1) was chaired by **Dr. Rama Chandra Rout**, Director of Nursing, Directorate of Nursing Odisha. **Dr. Y Swarnalatha**, Dean of Higher Studies, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, and **Dr. Sudha Chandrasekhar**, Advisor, HSTP graced the occasion. **Dr. Sephali** and **Dr. Abhay**, Additional Directors of Nursing attended the meeting. **Dr Sandipana Pati**, Joint Director, SIHFW was present.

**Dr. Rama Chandra Rout** shared that the competency assessment framework was comprehensive and emphasized that 50 identified role-based competencies would be utilized by CHOs to achieve the goals of the state. Given the rapid transformation of health systems at the community level, he stressed the need for CHOs to be trained in developing these competencies. He also urged the experts to validate the framework in a considered manner for scaling up at the state level.

**Dr. Sephali** motivated the experts to participate in the full-day event as architects of progress, poised to shape the future of CHO competency assessment in the state context. In the pursuit of this objective, she emphasized that the essence of competency assessment goes beyond the mere measurement of skills and knowledge. By customizing the competency assessment tools, the state stakeholders can embrace the richness of the state's diverse talents, ensuring that no potential goes untapped, and no skill set is left unnoticed.



*Photograph 1: Inaugural Session - Director of Nursing Dr Rama Chandra Rout is explaining the importance of Community Health Officers in the context of Odisha and setting the tone for the expert consultation*



**Dr. Abhaya Kumar** shared that competency assessment stands at the crossroads of individual growth, organizational development, and societal progress. He gladly stated that this consultation was not only to customize tools but also to forge lasting connections and partnerships. The exchange of ideas and experiences among experts in this room would create a network of collaboration to foster a culture of shared success.

**Dr. Sudha Chandrasekhar** expressed her gratitude to the participants and government officials for being a part of this program and highlighted that this consultation marks a pivotal moment in our collective journey. She reinforced the mission of consultation; to customize competency assessment tools to the state context, thereby empowering individuals and organizations to thrive in the face of evolving demands.

**Dr. Y Swarnalatha** thanked all the partners for giving them opportunity to transform communities through competent CHOs. She asserted that the CHO Competency Collaborative Team, with the support of the Directorate of Nursing, National and State Subject Matter Experts would achieve the project goals, and facilitate the steps to strengthen the CHO competencies in clinical care, public health care and manager domains to impact communities they work in.

**A. Presenting the Competency Assessment Framework:**

- **Ms. Ponnambily Chandy**, Principal Investigator and **Dr. S Kanchana**, Lead Subject Matter Expert and Co-PI were the moderators and presented the competency assessment framework to the experts.
- They explained competency-building stages, methodology and purposes of the state expert consultation. They listed 50 role-based competencies and highlighted the findings of gap analysis with the available literature. They also discussed various competency assessment formats and their relevance to be used for CHO's assessment in the state of Odisha.
- **Ms. Ponnambily Chandy** presented the 120 knowledge and attitude items to the experts. She also explained the CHO-CAT formulation and customization trackers which help to develop the assessment tools with equitable weightage to clinical care, public health care and manager domains.

**B. Session I- First level Customization of knowledge and attitude items:**

- The moderators divided the experts into three teams (see Photograph 2) and each team had a lead who was a national subject matter expert. The team leads were **Dr. Usha Mullick**, **Dr. Sushma Kumari Saini** and **Dr. Lukima Saikia**. Each team consisted of state SMEs, state nursing experts and CHOs. They identified 40 knowledge items to assess the competencies in which CHOs are directly involved. They also shortlisted 10 attitude items to assess the competencies in which CHOs are indirectly involved as a supervisor.
- The factors considered for the state-level customization of CHO-CAT were;
  1. Roles and responsibilities of CHOs in Odisha
  2. Disease patterns in the communities
  3. Knowing your population and vulnerable communities
  4. Organization of services at family/community/HWC/first referral level
  5. Approaches and resources for health promotion
  6. Management of primary health care team and work coordination
  7. Management of HWC.



*Photograph 1: Glimpses from Session I- First-level customization of knowledge and attitude items*

### C. Session II A-First level Customization of Skills Exercises:

- **Dr. S Kanchana** and **Ponnambily** listed the exercises and encouraged the state experts to identify the competency assessment exercises that CHOs are directly involved in their context. **Dr. Kanchana** collected experts' approval for shortlisting exercises through brain-storming discussions between state experts, in-service CHOs and subject matter experts. They shortlisted 25 exercises for skill assessment.

### D. Session II B- Second level Customization of knowledge and attitude items:

- The team was led by **Dr. Asha P Shetty**. **Dr. Usha Mullick**, **Dr.Sushma Kumari**, **Dr. Lukima Saini**, **Dr. Sandipana Pati**, **Ms. Bibudha Bijayalaxmi** and **Dr. Ankur Nair** were involved in this discussion (see Photograph 3). The team used a matrix (see Table 1) to finalize the competencies and knowledge and attitude items.
- At the end of the session, the team successfully finalized the full list of CHO's role-based competencies (50), knowledge (40) and attitude (10) items for their competency assessment. The team approved rephrasing the 50<sup>th</sup> competency 'untied funds management' to 'financial management' competency. Financial management includes the program and Jan Arogya Samiti funds.

**Table 1. Matrix for second-level customization of knowledge and attitude items**

	Team X	Team Y	Team Z	Final items
Competencies/	✓	✓	✓	Will be shortlisted
Knowledge and	✓	✓	×	Will be shortlisted
attitude	✓	×	×	Will be discussed and then, will be decided collectively
Items	×	×	×	Will not be shortlisted



*Photograph 2: Glimpses from Session IIB- Second-level customization of knowledge and attitude items*

#### E. Session III- Second-level customization of skill exercises:

- **Dr. S Kanchana and Ponnambily** highlighted the shortlisted exercises for the competency assessment of CHOs. They collected all expert's approval for finalizing the 25 exercises for the CHO's evaluation (see Photograph 4).



*Photograph 3: Glimpses of session III- Second-level of customization of skill exercises*

- **Dr. Kanchana** concluded the sessions by stressing the importance of customization of competency assessment tools for the comprehensive evaluation of CHO's competencies in Odisha. The findings of the assessment will play a vital role in designing the competency-based training manuals.

#### Valedictory Session:

The valedictory session was chaired by **Dr. Sephali**, Additional Director of Nursing. She gladly expressed her thanks to all experts who actively participated in the customization of tools. She found the project's progress very encouraging and offered her support and guidance to scale up the competency-based training of CHOs in the state.

CHO-CCT received appreciation from the national and state experts and it was encouraging. They look forward to conducting a national expert consultation with national stakeholders for national policy-informing so that other states can adapt this program to their contexts.



## Next Steps

HSTP's envisioned program on Improving Health Outcomes through developing Competency of Primary Health Care Workers in Odisha, implemented in collaboration with the Government of Odisha and Sathyabama College of Nursing, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology. We plan to continue our work through the following steps:

Sr. No.	Steps	Tentative Timelines
1.	Bilingual translation of the tools will be conducted.	December 2023
2.	Research and Ethics Committee clearance under the chairmanship of the Commissioner-cum-Secretary to Govt. of Odisha will be obtained.	January 2024
3.	Institutional Human Ethical Clearance from the Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology will be obtained.	January 2024
4.	Pretesting of the tools will be conducted in the Khorda district.	February 2024
5.	Data collection will be conducted in Khorda, Balangir, Sundargarh and Koraput districts for 2 months.	February 2024- March 2024
6.	The competency assessment report will be shared with the Directorate of Nursing, Odisha.	May 2024
7.	State Expert Consultation (virtual/physical) will be conducted to develop a design of a Competency Based Training (CBT) manual based on the competency assessment findings.	May 2024
8.	The dissemination workshop will be conducted in Odisha. This is to present the findings and CBT manuals to state stakeholders	August 2024
9.	National Expert Consultation (virtual/physical) will be conducted with national nursing policy stakeholders for policy-informing.	September 2024

Venue		Hotel Kalinga Ashok, Bhubaneswar	
Date	16 <sup>th</sup> November 2023		
10.00 AM	Registration Dr. Ankur Nair		
10.15 AM	Tea		
10.30 AM	Welcome Note Dr. Sudha Chandrasekhar Keynote Address Dr. Rama Chandra Rout, Director of Nursing		
10.40 AM	Introduction of experts Dr. Y Swarnalatha		
10.50 AM	Project Highlights Ponnambily Chandy		
11.00 AM	Session I- CAT First level Customization of Knowledge and Attitude Items Moderators: Dr. Kanchana and Ponnambily		
	Team I	Team II	Team III
	Dr. Usha (Lead-National SME) Ms. Shyama (State SME) Addl Director, Odisha Principal, CON, Cuttack Nursing Consultant CHO	Dr. Sushma (Lead-National SME) Ms. Sanjukta Dixit (State SME) Ms. Trupti Rekha Swain (State SME) Addl Director, Odisha Principal, Berahmpur Nursing Consultant CHO	Dr. Lukima (Lead-National SME) Dr. Asha (State SME) Principal, Puri Principal, Dhenkanal Nursing Consultant CHO
12.30 PM	Lunch		
01.00 PM	Room 1	Room 2	
	Session II A- CAT First level Customization of Skills Exercises Moderators: Dr. Kanchana and Ponnambily	Session II B- CAT Second level Customization of Knowledge and Attitude Items Team consists of Dr. Usha Mullick (National SME) Dr.Sushma Kumari (National SME) Dr. Lukima Saini (National SME) Dr. Asha P Shetty (State SME) Dr. Sandipana Pati (State Expert) Ms. Bibudha Bijayalaxmi (State Consultant) Dr. Ankur Nair (CHO-CCT)	
03.00 PM	Session III- CAT Second level Customization of Skill Exercises Moderators: Dr. Kanchana and Ponnambily		

## Annexure 2: Details of the participants- State Consultation

Venue	Hotel Kalinga Ashok, Bhubaneswar
3.30 PM	Valedictory Session
3.40 PM	Summary and Feedback By experts
3.50 PM	Vote of Thanks Dr. Y Swarnalatha
4.00 PM	Tea

Names	Roles
1. <b>Dr. Rama Chandra Rout, Director of Nursing, Odisha</b>	State nursing experts
2. <b>Dr, Sephali, Addl Director, Nursing, Odisha</b>	
3. <b>Dr Abhaya Kumar Dash, Addl. Director Training SIHFW, Odisha</b>	
4. <b>Dr. Bijayalaskhmi Dash, Principal, College of Nursing, SCB MCH, Cuttack</b>	
5. <b>Prof. Rajalaxmi Mishra, Principal, College of Nursing, MKCG MCH Berhampur</b>	
6. <b>Dr. Dr. Sandipana Pati, Joint Director, SIHFW</b>	
7. <b>Dr. Jharana Pradhan, Principal, College of Nursing, Dhenkanal</b>	
8. <b>Dr. Nayana Kumari Samal, Principal, Puri</b>	
9. <b>Bibudha Bijayalaxmi, Nursing Consultant, Odisha</b>	
10. <b>Balachandran B L, Nursing Clinical Consultant, SCB College of Nursing, Cuttack.</b>	
11. <b>P. Joshoda Reddy, Nursing Consultant, Odisha</b>	
12. <b>Manasi Moharana, CHO, Khordha, Odisha</b>	
13. <b>Sasmita Sahoo, CHO, Khordha, Odisha</b>	
14. <b>Madhusmita Behera, CHO, Khordha, Odisha</b>	
15. <b>Dr. Asha P Shetty, Principal, College of Nursing, AIIMS, Bhubaneswar</b>	Odisha State Subject Matter Experts
16. <b>Mrs. Shyama Devi, Assistant Professor, Community Health Nursing, College of Nursing, AIIMS, Bhubaneswar</b>	
17. <b>Ms. Sanjukta Dixit, Assistant Professor, Mental Health Nursing, Kalinga Institute of Nursing Sciences, Bhubaneswar</b>	
18. <b>Ms. Trupti Rekha Swain, Assistant Professor, Mental Health Nursing, Kalinga Institute of Nursing Sciences, Bhubaneswar</b>	

Names	Roles
19. <b>Dr. Usha Mullick Ukande, Director, Edu Serum X College of Nursing, Indore, Madhya Pradesh.</b> 20. <b>Dr. Sushma Kumari Saini, Associate Professor, National Institute of Nursing Education, PGIMER, Chandigarh.</b> 21. <b>Dr. Lukima Saikia, Professor, B.Sc Nursing College Dibrugarh, Assam</b>	National Subject Matter Experts
22. <b>Mrs. Ponnambily Chandy, Assistant Professor, Sathyabama College of Nursing, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai</b> 23. <b>Dr. S Kanchana, Principal and Research Director, Omayal Achi College of Nursing, Chennai</b>	Technical experts in nursing-CHO Competency Collaborative Team
24. <b>Dr. Y. Swarnalatha, Dean (Higher Studies), Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai</b> 25. <b>Dr. Sudha Chandrasekhar, Advisor to HSTP</b> 26. <b>Dr. Ankur Nair, Specialist Health Planning, HSTP</b>	Administration-CHO Competency Collaborative Team





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