

PRESS RELEASE

Piramal Foundation to invest INR 100 crores towards COVID Relief in Aspirational Districts in Partnership with Niti Aayog

- *This initiative will reach over 1.25 lakh people in 4 Aspirational Districts of Maharashtra and 20 lakh people across the country*
- *100 COVID Care centres to be set up in Tribal and Rural blocks across India that currently have poor access to health services*
- *20 lakh patients to be provided Home Care Support for asymptomatic, mild symptoms to reduce pressure on overburdened health system*

Mumbai, May 28, 2021: Piramal Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Piramal Enterprises Limited (PEL), has launched significant initiatives to address the devastating impact of the second wave of Covid in India's Aspirational Districts. To address the current emergency due to the second wave of Covid-19, the Foundation, will set up 100 Covid Care Centres in rural and tribal blocks across 25 of the worst affected Aspirational districts, and Home Care Support to the tribal and rural population with poor access to health services in 112 Aspirational districts across India in partnership with Niti Aayog. Piramal Foundation will invest INR 100 crores towards COVID Relief in the Aspirational Districts, in Partnership with Niti Aayog.

The intervention seeks to reach 2 million people in 1143 blocks through a network of 1000+ NGOs and over 1 lac volunteers. In Maharashtra alone, it aims to reach 1.25 lakh people in 32 blocks of 4 Aspirational Districts of **Gadchiroli, Nandurbar, Osmanabad and Washim**.

In Maharashtra, the 4 Aspirational Districts have been among the worst hit. These districts account for 1.6 lakh cases and close to 3063 fatalities. The number is growing alarmingly by the day, with almost 3.3 per cent of the deaths in Maharashtra happening in these aspirational districts.

Dr. Swati Piramal, Public Health Expert and Vice-Chairperson Piramal Enterprises Limited said, "As the pandemic spreads rapidly from urban areas to the rural hinterlands, containing the second wave of COVID-19 and curtailing the severity of a third wave is the top priority of the Government. With its limited public health infrastructure and lack of skilled personnel, the rural health system is not adequately equipped to manage a surge in cases. There is a need for urgent and innovative action to address this gap. 'Anamaya', the Tribal Health Collaborative and other Piramal Foundation initiatives will help reduce the burden on the system and improve access to healthcare for the rural and tribal communities."

100 30-bedded temporary Covid Care Centres are planned at the block level in 25 aspirational districts, including 4 districts in Maharashtra. Each Centre will cater to the population in the catchment area of the associated Primary Health Centre. These will be dedicated spaces for COVID positive, asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic cases to be isolated and cared for in a well-ventilated room with essential facilities.

Home Care Support will be provided to 20 lakh rural and tribal communities in 112 Aspirational Districts through 1,000+ NGOs and 1 lakh plus volunteers to support COVID patients and families as a viable alternative for asymptomatic, mild symptom patients seeking support from hospitals. Through local NGOs the intervention will enlist and train Volunteers to engage with patients based on inbound/out-bound calls to educate caretakers to follow COVID protocol and provide timely updates about patients.

“This pandemic has re-iterated the power of collaboration for all of us. The support from philanthropic partners and civil society organisations have contributed immensely to each districts preparedness and COVID response. Piramal Foundation has been a crucial member of our COVID task force in Nandurbar, they have been supporting us in the Aspirational Districts Programme for three years now and with this second wave, they’ve left no stone unturned in supporting us with providing essential medical supplies, following up with home isolation centres, handholding the on-ground staff, mobilising communities for covid vaccination, and popularising COVID appropriate behaviour through community and tribal influencers,” said the District Magistrate, Nandurbar, Maharashtra.

About Aspirational Districts:

Government of India has identified 112 Districts across the country based on a composite index of challenges faced in terms of poverty, with citizens having relatively poor health and nutritional outcomes, educational status, and deficient infrastructure. 50 % of ADs, are severely affected by demographic, geographic and socio economic issues, such as 25 districts being tribal dominated, 23 being flood prone, and where 25% of landless households are dependent on manual labour.

About ADTP:

Launched by the Hon’ble PM, the ‘Transformation of Aspirational Districts’ programme aims to effectively transform these districts based on 3 contours of Convergence (of Central & State Schemes), Collaboration (of Central, State level ‘Prabhari’ Officers & District Collectors), and Competition. With States as the main drivers, it focuses on the strength of each district, identify low-hanging fruits for immediate improvement, measure progress, and rank districts.

About Piramal Foundation

Piramal Foundation is a Section 8 company that develops innovative solutions to resolve critical roadblocks towards unlocking India's economic potential. The Piramal Group's core values of Knowledge, Action Care, and Impact guide the organization in carrying out its responsibilities towards society. It believes that considerable positive change can occur when we collaborate with like-minded partners and nurture scalable projects, ensuring a long-term impact. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Piramal Foundation is focused on universal primary education, empowering women, reducing child mortality rates, improving maternal health, and improving access to safe drinking water. In 2018, Piramal Foundation partnered with NITI Aayog to transform 25 Aspirational Districts across seven states in India. The Foundation currently works across 25 states and has impacted over 112 million lives, mostly in partnership with state governments.

For Media Queries:

Dimple Kapur | Group Head - Corporate Communications | Piramal Group
Dimple.Kapur@piramal.com