



Maternal and perinatal Health Research collaboration, India (MaatHRI) is a UK-India collaboration for maternal and perinatal health research. It is a collaboration between the University of Oxford (National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit, Nuffield Department of Population Health) and 15 government and private hospitals across five states in India.

Research through the MaatHRI platform on hold due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic from 23rd March to 26th May 2020

Main reasons were:

- Unable to transport blood samples to the national laboratory in Delhi from the collaborating hospitals,
- Several collaborating hospitals were converted to treatment units for Covid-19 patients. Only emergency obstetric care was operational.

The projects have still not resumed in three major hospitals that are operating as primary facilities for Covid-19 patients as the cases continue to rise in the country.

Impact of the pandemic on MaatHRI work-streams

The major impact will be on participant recruitment as the patient flow to the hospitals has decreased.

From the number of deliveries recorded in the monthly case notification form, there is a 14% decrease in hospital deliveries in March 2020, 44% decrease in April 2020, and 47% decrease in May 2020 compared with the average monthly number of deliveries in the collaborating hospitals prior to the lockdown.



Capacity building

Prof. Dipika Deka, Vice Chancellor, Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Sciences, Assam

"We can now see the outcomes of the training workshops on research and Continuing Medical Education that were conducted last year. We received 21 applications from faculty across the medical colleges in Assam to undertake research on various aspects of the Covid-19 pandemic. They just needed a push and encouragement."

Dr Sereesha Rao, Registrar, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, SMCH, Assam (Site-PI, SMCH)

"It is indeed a great honour to join MaatHRI since October, 2019 from Silchar Medical College & Hospital (SMCH). The epidemiological research undertaken through MaatHRI can give an accurate estimate of the rates and trend in severe maternal complications and improve the care and outcomes for mothers and babies. I received training in conducting echocardiography using hand-held machine and I have been provided with a hand-held transthoracic echocardiography machine, which I use to image the heart of pregnant women enrolled in the heart failure study. I also lead all other aspects of the MaatHRI project in SMCH and hope to serve further in a holistic way. As an early career professional, I value the experience of being part of the MaatHRI collaboration."



Featuring MaatHRI staff



Ms Rupanjali Deka (Project Manager)

Hi, I am Rupanjali Deka. I joined MaatHRI as Project Manager in January, 2019. I have an MBA degree from Gauhati University, Guwahati. Being interviewed and selected as Project Manager for a collaborative study between prominent Universities and medical colleges in India and the University of Oxford, UK was itself a delightful feeling. It was an opportunity to further test my potential and experience. With a previous experience of 20 years in administration, I was excited, but apprehensive to start work in the field of research. Understanding new medical terminologies and administration of a clinical research project was new, interesting and yet challenging.

As Project Manager, I am assigned with overall responsibility for the successful planning, monitoring and maintaining the logistics and finances for the project, supervising research nurses, monitoring data entry, and coordinating with our laboratory partner (from local to the national level). Over the past 18 months, I have learnt that co-ordinating 15 hospitals with different requirements need skills like being proactive, patient, and self-contemplation. Nevertheless, a superb combination of investigators, collaborators, research nurses, laboratory team and a very well-designed online data portal makes me look forward to managing the day-to-day activities of the MaatHRI platform. I thank everyone for their support in taking the MaatHRI project forward.



Ms Manisha Das, Research Nurse, GMCH, Assam

I am Manisha Das, Research Nurse from Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH). I completed my degree as a laboratory technician from GMCH and a Bachelor's degree in Science (BSc) from Gauhati University. In 2018, I heard about the MaatHRI research project, and I applied for the post of Research Nurse in GMCH. After a successful interview, I was selected along with Ms Dipti Talukdar, my colleague in the same post.

My experience with the project is tremendous, and I have gained experience and learned many things related to maternal health under the guidance of my supervisors. In particular, I greatly value the experience and knowledge gained on anaemia and heart failure in pregnancy. I feel comfortable working on the project and would love to be associated with such projects in the future.



Ms Safina Ahmed, Research Nurse, FAAMCH, Assam

I am Safina Ahmed from Kandapara, Barpeta. I completed my graduation from MC College, Barpeta and training as ANM (Auxiliary Nurse & Midwifery) from FAAMCH Barpeta with a First class (2nd position).

In 2018, I got the opportunity to work as a Research Nurse in the MaatHRI Project based at FAAMCH. This has enabled me to gain further knowledge in maternal health and has substantially increased my interest in research in the health sector. I have learned many new things related to maternal health, especially maternal anaemia and heart failure. I am sure my experience in MaatHRI as Research Nurse will be a treasure in my career. I am happy to be a part of this project.

My work environment is very healthy and friendly. All doctors and other staff members are very helpful.

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