

Measures to Contain COVID-19 in the Long Run

A. Community Participation

Community involvement will hold the key in the coming days to fight against the disease by creating awareness. A ward level committee namely “Ward Sachetan Committee” mostly consists of 25 to 30 young members in its executive committee will be formed. The Committee will also have at least five elder members to function as mentors.

Role of Mentors

1. Elderly Members selected as mentors from Doctors/Retired Officers/Local Intellectuals etc of the ward.
2. The mentors should extend support to the executive committee and also guide the old Age association/forums and create awareness as much as possible.

Role of Executive Committee

The Executive Committee members will be known as “Covid Sachetaks” may be selected out of the following groups

- Biju Yuva Vahini Members
- Local and Active SHG members
- NGO members
- Local Volunteers
- Local Club members etc

The Roles & Responsibilities of the Executive Members are as follows

1. The committee will monitor the family under home quarantine about their adherence of guidelines and also make provision for smooth supply of household essentials/medicines to them.
2. The committee will create awareness among the citizens of the ward on maintenance of social distancing, adoption of hand washing practices and use of face mask/face cover and no spitting outside which are essential components for fight against COVID-19. The committee also keep a watch over function/ceremony and check numbers of participation in it.
3. The committee will create awareness among locals to eradicate the fear attached to the disease and give message to citizens not to treat quarantined family or any positive cases as untouchables and persuade others and neighbours not to practise social ostracization for the suspect/patient.

4. The committee should act as a watch and ward mechanism for the local authority in fight against COVID. They should inform the local authority against violation of social distancing measures like huge gathering/crowding etc. They will also check the social distancing norms adopted by the daily markets/shop owners etc.

B. Care for Vulnerable Section

➤ The Elderly, Person with Co-morbidities, small kids and pregnant women are the vulnerable section for the COVID-19. Their proper care will ensure lesser chances of their infection and subsequent mortality. A Mobile App can be developed for the vulnerable section. The vulnerable citizens will be advised to use the APP for their benefits. The App will cover the following Aspects

- Sharing of Resources and credible information about the management of disease.
- Consultation with registered doctors through the App.
- Sharing of information about the Ward about its characteristics, available quarantine centres, affected persons of the ward, numbers of person under quarantine etc
- List of facilities available for their benefits like online availability of daily needs/medicines etc.
- All Vulnerable people should be able to adopt relevant protocols of home isolation

BMC has already developed a Mobile APP covering the above aspects.

- In each house having vulnerable people a “care giver” will be identified who can be a young and active member of the family. In case elderly people staying alone, a volunteer from the community can be identified as a Care Giver. Since the role of Care giver is of prime importance they will be oriented on fortnightly basis and be updated on the recent methodologies of caring. He / She will be the person who will actually ensure that all protocols to be followed by the vulnerable person. Also he will be the key contact for the local administration.
- Separate provision for the Elderly and vulnerable people may be done at every level.
 - In urban areas Separate Park timings slots can be made for exclusive use of them when no other person is allowed.
 - Banks may be advised to do separate arrangement for senior citizens about their banking needs. The banks should orient them to use mobile/net banking extensively so that they will have minimum resort

to visit the branches. Further, dedicated relationship executive may be nominated by the banks for home visit to elderly customers for their banking need.

- Hospitals should also make some separate provision/timing for their OPD etc.

C. Awareness Creation

Currently the numbers of positives cases are on the rise with the lifting of lock down measures. This is in sharp contrast to the containment measures taken earlier. This may create confusions among the citizens and also tends them to become careless or may also create panic among them. Formidable multi-modal awareness campaign needs to be developed for all sections of the society for their information and adoption. Theme based Awareness videos/ animated videos need to be developed and shared through all social media platforms for their information and adoption. This will instil confidence among the citizens and will promote good practices thereby reducing careless attitude towards the disease. Different kind of awareness module through ward committees may also be developed like information about disease, scientific way of using masks, comparison of virus transmission between symptomatic and asymptomatic cases etc so that community response will be confident.