

Community participation in improving COVID-19 vaccination programmes and testing facilities in MOH Area – Piliyandala, Colombo, Sri Lanka

I. Introduction

Due to the prevailing COVID-19 situation in the country, COVID-19 vaccination programmes and testing facilities for early detection of new cases were the utmost priorities during this period. As continuous public vaccination programmes are carried out to reach healthcare goals within the country, we had to perform more than 1000 vaccinations per day. One of the major objectives of this project was to get community participation to upgrade facilities for people who are coming for vaccination, developing a friendly atmosphere to perform testing for COVID-19 and ensuring the safety of healthcare workers.



II. Methodology

With the help of the community, we wanted to rearrange the car park area into a vaccination area. One of the major concerns we found was the effects of rain and heat. Thus, a long term permanent tent was built, making the vaccination journey a more comfortable one for the people.

We also wanted to arrange an end-to-end process to safely conduct PCR and rapid antigen tests to diagnose COVID-19, ensuring the safety of healthcare personnel involved in the procedure.

Community group willingly supported our team to build a new innovative container to perform testing for COVID-19 with the guidance of the healthcare sector. This unique product developed to perform PCR and RAT ensured the safety of the healthcare personnel as this container can be utilized for mobile testing as well.

III. Results and Discussion

Conducting outdoor vaccination for the public on rainy days was not disturbed due to the new modification. Up to now 128,033 doses have been performed on this center. This also helped in arranging drive-through vaccination for those who are unable to walk. This outdoor setup was appreciated by the public as it reduces the transmission of communicable diseases.

By utilizing the new container, more than 10,000 PCR tests and more than 4,000 RATs were done. Overall, this futuristic method enabled a methodical order in performing tests.

IV. Conclusions

Active involvement of community groups to get their support whenever needed will always help in improving the quality of health services provided.