

# Impact Assessment of Indian Red Cross Society Cancer Care Supported by Aurobindo Pharma Foundation, Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh.

## Executive Summary



This impact assessment examined the Aurobindo Pharma Foundation (APF) CSR investment in Indian Red Cross Cancer Hospital in 2019. APF is the philanthropic wing of Aurobindo Pharma Limited and strives for the nation's social and economic growth through its Corporate Social Responsibility program.

As one of the firms committed to creating positive, enduring change in the community, it has taken a focused approach to social responsibility that includes empowering people to give back to their communities, operating in ways that are socially responsible and environmentally sustainable, and working with its stakeholders to address societal challenges.

APF continues to integrate the SDGs into its CSR strategy to have a lasting positive impact on society. Its primary focus is on education and skill development, health care and nutrition, sanitation, social equity, environmental sustainability, disaster management, and rural development.

Adhering to new CSR protocols, Aurobindo Pharma Foundation has to get its interventions assessed to understand whether the interventions have impacted society and, if so, to what extent?

Aurobindo Pharma Foundation has assigned the Impact Assessment of their investment in Indian Red Cross Society Cancer Care in Potti Sriramulu Nellore to the Poverty Learning Foundation (CSR00002642), a think tank with a decade of professional expertise.

The objectives are:

1. Examining the inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact of APF CSR support to IRCS cancer hospital,
2. Quantify the visibility created and local acceptancy,
3. Quantifying the perceptions of different category of stakeholders,
4. Examine the sustainability of the project, and
5. Lessons learned for future planning.

PLF adopted the OECD evaluation framework to judge the impacts. The OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet) has defined six evaluation criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability – and two principles for their use. These criteria provide a normative framework used to determine the merit or worth of an intervention. They serve as the basis upon which evaluative judgments are made.

Eight doctors, one convenor, one administrator, few lab technicians were thoroughly interviewed to get sufficient information on the impact. Besides, 33 cancer patients were interviewed to understand their satisfaction over the quality of care. During the interviews with patients, the study team also had a chance to interact with their caregivers. Finally, it provides credible and valuable information, enabling the lessons learned to feed into the decision-making process of APF.

APF has provided Elekta Flexitron HDR 10 channels advanced brachytherapy<sup>1</sup> to IRCS cancer hospital during 2019. The cost of the equipment was INR 1.35 crore.

**RELEVANCE** - *Is the intervention meeting the intended purpose?*

1. Investment by APF in building the capacity of the IRCS cancer hospital by providing Elekta Flexitron HDR is the right choice. With cancer being on the rise across Andhra Pradesh, oncologists call for early detection to check the growth of the disease. It is possible with advanced equipment.
2. APF support has added value to the philanthropic support by *Jakka Sujathamma*, and *Dodla Varadha Reddy* to IRCS cancer hospital. It has brought excellent local visibility to the hospital.
3. Having the Elekta Flexitron HDR is much relevant to the present cancer care. It facilitated the medical team to treat cancer patients more effectively. The hospital is accredited with the Department of Health, Government of Andhra Pradesh, and linked to YSR Aarogya Sree scheme. It supplements other cancer care services in Potti Sriramulu Nellore district.
4. The high volume of patients with Breast, Cervical, and Oral cavity and Pharynx cancer, the medium volume of patients with digestive and respiratory system cancer, low volume of patients with Pancreatic, Genital, Urinary, and Endocrine systems related cancer are availing the treatment.
5. It signifies the availability of specializations, visibility, and popularity of the IRCS cancer hospital among neighboring districts, including Tamil Nadu.
6. It also collaborated with Lion's Club, Vasavi Club, Walkers' Associations in organizing the rural health camps.
7. It brings visibility to surgical equipment; for instance, Elekta Flexotron HDR, results in an increasing patient flow. Such joint camps will also attract funds (in the form of donations) to the hospital.
8. Most female patients approach the hospital for treatment in Cervix, Breast, and head and neck cancer. Among males, the majority are having Head and Neck Cancer, GI tract cancer, and Genito-Urinary cancer.

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<sup>1</sup> Nore: Elekta is the company name manufactured the Flexitron HDR machine. Brachytherapy is the treatment process. Brachytherapy is suited as a single modality or in combination with other treatments such as external beam radiation therapy. Elekta Brachytherapy offers you best-in-class clinical solutions, a worldwide presence and above all, a commitment to patient care. <https://www.elekta.com/brachytherapy/>

### **EFFECTIVENESS – *Is the intervention effective to reach defined objectives?***

9. After installing the Elekta Flexitron HDR in 2019, most cancer patients, who used to approach other cancer hospitals, turned to IRCS cancer hospital increased patient flow.
10. After having the Elekta Flexitron HDR, the demonstration effect, in terms of quality of care, has spread across the IRCS, and the society is planning to start a similar hospital with cancer specialization in Srikakulam need is more.
11. Multidisciplinary team meetings (MDTMs) occasionally take place to learn the technology and use the new device.
12. Through Elekta BrachyAcademy, IRCS medical team, including peer teams, aims to a peer-to-peer medical education portfolio. It includes clinical workshops and training visits to lead hospitals.

### **EFFICIENCY – *how well are resources being used?***

13. By saving the customs duty on Elekta Flexitron HDR, the hospital has procured two more apparatuses: Couch costs INR sixteen lakhs and Breast Board costs INR seven lakhs. It indicates the efficient way of using the grant from APF.
14. The annual maintenance cost of Elekta Flexitron is managed by its funds generated from treating the patients under YSR Aarogya Sree scheme.
15. The good practice is that one of the doctors served the cancer patients free of cost over the years by donating her salaries back to the hospital. It is one of the significant models under a philanthropy.
16. In the absence of a specific revenue model, the hospital generates funds from donors and local philanthropies, efficiently using the money in standard quality maintenance.

### **IMPACT – *What difference does the intervention make?***

17. The impact of the advanced Elekta Flexitron HDR is evident from the increased patient flow between 2019 and 2021.
18. The advanced technology of Elekta Flexitron HDR, has improved the efficiency of doctors in treating cancer patients, particularly with: Head & Neck, Bronchus & esophagus, Breast, Skin, Prostate, Rectum, Bladder, and Gynaecology related complications.
19. Elekta Flexitron HDR is giving better outcomes in patients' care. Oncologists confirmed the benefits both to patients and to the medical team. It minimized out-of-pocket expenses, reduced unwanted variations in the process, scope to gain life expectancy, reduced the waiting time.
20. It allowed the medical staff to tailor the care around patients' health conditions.
21. The smooth clinical workflow, improved treatment efficiency, treatment accuracy without errors are the significant impacts with Elekta Flexitron HDR.

22. It further minimized the number of sessions patients has to undergo resulting in cost saving to the patient. It is one of the value-added to the investment.
23. Overall the level of patient satisfaction is high. Quality diagnosis and treatment result in medical adherence by patients and lower inpatient mortality rates.
24. Effective use and impact of Flexitron can be ensured if the IRCS cancer hospital has a CT scan facility.

### **SUSTAINABILITY – *will the benefits last?***

26. The existence of the *YSR Arogya sree* scheme is primarily supporting to sustain efforts of IRCS cancer hospital.
27. Sustainability in mobilizing cancer patients depends on how the hospital is equipped with modern equipment to treat cancer cases. Having a CT scan and linear accelerator further supports IRCS cancer hospital to reach out to many in a more efficient manner.
28. The sustainability of the hospital is linked with an effective and professional way of MIS. It impacts the management of patient care and related administrative functions.

### **Concluding Recommendation**

29. The impact assessment found that IRCS cancer hospital has justified the investment from APF by efficiently utilizing the Elekta Flexitron HDR Brachytherapy in treating 775 cancer patients.
30. Keeping the success and efficiency aside, IRCS cancer hospital has to explore sufficient funds to procure CT scan. It will help the poor patients who cannot offer corporate costs to get CT scan results from private clinics.
31. It is essential to upgrade the equipment to meet the growing needs, addressing emerging medical challenges in cancer care and treatment. Necessary exploration may be done for funding support from government or any other related institutional donors.
32. Though most patients are satisfied with the services, it is essential to focus on different ways to minimize registration time and improve hygienic sanitation through bio-toilets. Most importantly, it should establish digital MIS to simplify the registration process and preserve the patients' data for a more extended period.

