



TATA MEMORIAL CENTRE

A GRANT-IN-AID INSTITUTION UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY, GOVT. OF INDIA

Centre for Cancer Epidemiology

The Unit for Strengthening Cause of Death Data (USCOD)

HIGHLIGHTS

- USCOD celebrated its 3rd Year Anniversary working as the Data for Health in-country facilitator for strengthening cause of death and CRVS in India. The unit released its triennial work report and quarterly newsletter, and the event was attended by the hybrid presence of the key stakeholders of USCOD from India and overseas.
- Inaugural meeting of National and International Advisory Committee members held in the month of November under the chairmanship of Director, Centre for Cancer Epidemiology, Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai.
- Development of a standard operating procedure for state level implementation of MCCD training & its subsequent translation in Hindi and use of mandate MCCD Form 4 and 4A in the state of Bihar.
- CDC Foundation- India visit Members of CDC Foundation and the University of New South Wales (UNSW) visited India for an in-country visit to a few states where USCOD is actively working. The goal of this visit was to provide an overview of the activities of USCOD, stakeholder visits to facilitate collaboration and plan for way forward, brainstorm of research prospective, discuss budgets and upcoming phase planning.



GOVERNANCE & ADVOCACY

State 1 - BIHAR

Strengthening MCCD Implementation through Policy and Oversight in Bihar:

Following the state-level MCCD Training of Trainers held in August 2024, a comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was drafted and submitted to the Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Health Department, Bihar. The SOP outlines key guidelines, including training interns and residents through trained trainers in all medical colleges, mandatory adoption of MCCD Forms 4 and 4A across institutions, monthly reporting of training to the Health Department, and monitoring the quality and impact of MCCD implementation. It also includes provisions for penalties in case of non-compliance. The ACS has verbally appreciated the initiative and expressed intent to approve and circulate the SOP to all government medical colleges. A technical specialist within the Health Department has been tasked with reviewing the SOP for final edits, marking significant progress in strengthening the state's MCCD framework.

GOVERNANCE & ADVOCACY

State 2 - MAHARASHTRA

Strengthening MCCD Governance in Maharashtra:

In collaboration with the State Bureau of Health Intelligence and Vital Statistics, Directorate of Health Services, efforts are underway to improve the quality of MCCD and ICD Coding in Maharashtra. USCOD has supported the ICD Coding of MCCD forms from 2023 at the SBHIVS, Pune. USCOD is also working alongside SBHIVS to implement and institutionalize a dedicated ICD Coding team at Pune. In the meanwhile USCOD is supporting SBHIVS in building the capacity of each district of Maharashtra for MCCD and ICD Coding leveraging on the district level MCCD Cell.



Nagpur Circle Training

State 3 - UTTAR PRADESH

Advancing MCCD Training and Governance Initiatives:

A proposal to establish a Medical Superintendent Committee in Varanasi has been submitted to the Chief Medical Officer. There has been an agreement for the same and the details of nodal officers from the Varanasi division will be provided by the CMO Office. Technical help with regard to the understanding of the baseline assessment and the analysis of the MCCD forms of the GSVM Kanpur for their research proposal is being provided. A meeting with the Medical Superintendent of Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute included discussions on an MCCD training proposal, and a tentative date has been set for training resident doctors.

State 4 - ASSAM

Strengthening MCCD Training & Collaboration with Directorate of Census Operations:

USCOD collaborated with the office of the Joint Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Government of Assam, to initiate & organize a Training of Trainers (ToT) program on Medical Certification of Cause of Death (MCCD) for the clinicians of medical colleges & district hospitals. Efforts are currently underway with the Directorate of Health Services to finalize nominations for an upcoming online MCCD orientation, marking a significant step forward in enhancing the state's healthcare capacity. USCOD accompanied the team from the Directorate of Census Operations, Assam & joined their field supervisory team for an observation of verbal autopsy reporting practices in the Darrang district.

State 5 - PUNJAB

Strengthening MCCD Training Framework in Punjab:

USCOD held advocacy meetings with the Directorate of Medical Education and Research (DMER), Punjab, to promote MCCD training for medical interns, postgraduate residents, and faculty in government and private medical colleges. A training proposal (SOP) has been submitted for approval. Additionally, a proposal for a one-day Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on MCCD and ICD coding in district hospitals was submitted to the Director's office, HBCHRC New Chandigarh. The training, planned in two batches, is tentatively scheduled for early 2025.

State 6- HARYANA

Advancing MCCD Training Initiatives in Haryana:

USCOD held key advocacy meetings with the Directorate of Medical Education and Research (DMER) in Haryana, emphasizing the need for MCCD training for medical interns, postgraduate residents, and faculty in both government and private medical colleges. A detailed training proposal has been submitted to the DMER for review and approval to facilitate this initiative.

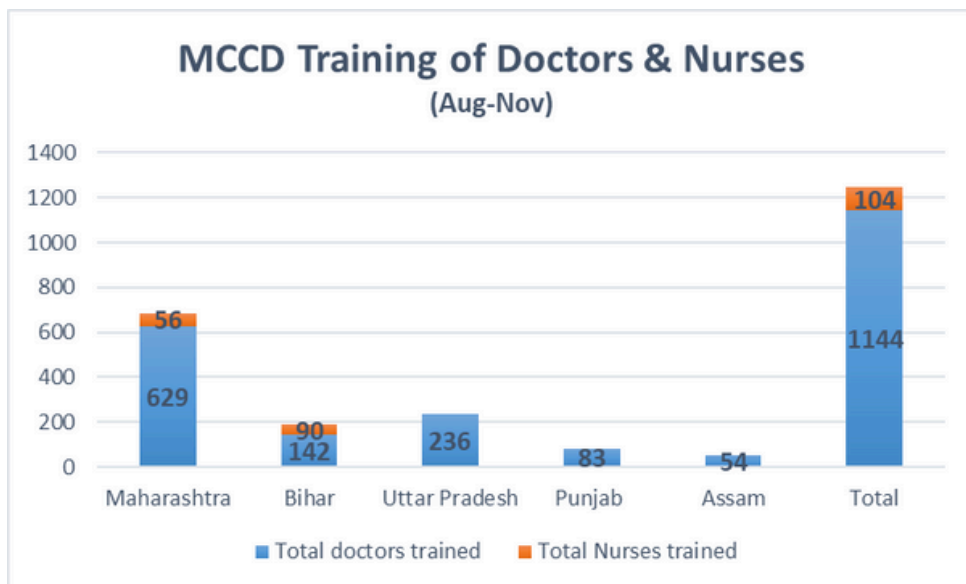
India, CDC Foundation India Visit

Members of CDC Foundation and the University of New South Wales (UNSW) visited India for an in-country visit to a few states where USCOD is actively working. The goal of this visit was to provide an overview of the activities of USCOD, stakeholder visits to facilitate collaboration and plan for way forward, brainstorm of research prospective, discuss budgets and upcoming phase planning. As a part of this visit the CDC Foundation and UNSW members accompanied by USCOD staff visited Ludhiana and Chandigarh in Punjab, Patna and Muzaffarpur in Bihar and Mumbai and Pune in Maharashtra. In Ludhiana, the teams met with the principal and head of community medicine at Christian Medical College, Ludhiana followed by important meetings with the Directorate General of Medical Education Punjab and Haryana, Directorate General of Health Services Punjab in Chandigarh.

In Bihar high level meetings were held in Patna with the Secretary and Special Secretary of Health Department, Directorate of Census Operations, Directorate of Economics and Statistics (Chief Registrar for Births and Deaths), Director of State Health Society and the Medical Records Department at AIIMS Patna. In Maharashtra the teams met with Deputy Executive Health Officer, Public Health Department, Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai along with Registration of Births and Death In-charge, Mortality Coding team at MCGM and authorities at Tata Memorial Hospital. The teams met with Deputy Registrar for Births and Deaths for Maharashtra in Pune.



● **CAPACITY BUILDING & TRAINING**



Assam: 54 resident doctors from 10 Disease Management Groups of Dr. B Borooah Cancer Institute were trained on MCCD.

Bihar: Bihar’s Health Department and Directorate of Census Operations, with technical support from USCOD, conducted a two-day Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop on August 22-23, 2024. The workshop was attended by 142 participants, including medical doctors from 12 state government medical colleges and 2 central government medical colleges in Bihar. Along with the medical doctors, a few participants specializing in medical records were invited to attend the TOT workshop. Furthermore, the officials of the Directorate of Census Operations conducted a session on the ‘Process of Cause of Death Registration and Legal Provisions of MCCD under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act 1969/2023’. MCCD Training of 90 staff nurses at Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Centre (HBCHRC), Muzaffarpur has been completed.

Punjab: MCCD Orientation training was conducted for medical interns of the Punjab Institute for Medical Sciences, Jalandhar, Punjab. Total of 85 interns attended this training online via digital learning platform of the medical college.

Maharashtra: USCOD has conducted extensive MCCD training sessions across Maharashtra, targeting diverse groups to strengthen capacity in accurate cause-of-death certification. At Tata Memorial Hospital (TMH), Mumbai, weekly sessions trained over 200 resident doctors, while the Advanced Centre for Treatment, Research, and Education in Cancer (ACTREC) trained 56 nursing staff and 14 resident doctors, with knowledge assessments integrated into the sessions. Regional trainings included a two-day program for 78 participants in Pune and Thane, 127 participants from six districts in Nagpur, and 85 participants from eight districts in Aurangabad, focusing on MCCD, CRVS, and ICD coding. At Nair Hospital, a specialized session for 16 assistant medical officers and mortuary staff addressed form accuracy and compliance. These efforts aim to build a skilled workforce and ensure high-quality MCCD practices across the state.

Initiatives are taken to implement IRIS mortality coding software in MPMCC, Tata Memorial Centre Varanasi & HBCHRC, Tata Memorial Centre Muzaffarpur in order to identify the underlying cause of death. SOPs are getting developed that will serve as a pilot and could be disseminated to other institutions if successful.

CAPACITY BUILDING & TRAINING

Uttar Pradesh: At TMC Varanasi, 30 resident doctors have completed MCCD training, with follow-ups ongoing to address implementation challenges. In collaboration with the Directorate of Census Operations, Uttar Pradesh, MCCD training sessions were conducted for Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Medical College, Kanpur, and Motilal Nehru Medical College, Prayagraj, training 183 and 55 doctors respectively. MCCD training of 58 doctors have been completed for the Madam Mohan Malviya Cancer Centre (MPMMCC) and Homi Bhabha Cancer Centre (HBCH) including the newly joined residents training is underway.

RESEARCH

1. Assam: Baseline quality assessment for MCCD Form 4 for BBCI, Guwahati has been completed for the period- January 2021 to August 2024.

2. Punjab: Baseline quality assessment of the use of Forms 4 and 4A at Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Center (Mullanpur) and Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital (Sangrur) for July–August 2024 has been completed. Outcome reports for the baseline assessments conducted at these institutions for 2022 and 2023 have been finalized.

3. Maharashtra: USCOD is technically supporting the baseline MCCD and ICD Coding quality assessment for 8 wards of Mumbai in collaboration with MCGM. The first phase of assessments have been completed and the teams are now focused on the second phase. The Advanced Centre for Treatment, Research, and Education in Cancer (ACTREC), Navi Mumbai, has completed a baseline quality assessment of MCCD forms certified across all Tata Memorial Centre (TMC) centers from 2020 to August 2024. USCOD in collaboration with the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at KEM Hospital, Mumbai has initiated a research study for assessing the baseline quality MCCD in the department of Medicine and the long-term impact of training on the same. Research Studies Extract between August 2024 to November 2024

Research studies like short term impact assessment of Medical Certificate for Cause of Death (MCCD) Trainings in enriching the knowledge and practices in MCCD of the training participants were observed. Such immediate impact of MCCD Trainings was assessed on basis of enriching the training participants' knowledge and practices in MCCD at various training centres.

At Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai a total of 336 participants were trained in 10 batches in MCCD guidelines, as per their knowledge-based assessment report, participants outcome score was raised from 4597 Pre training score to 5852 Post training i.e. their average score was hiked from 13.67 to 17.26 after training. Whereas the same participants when assessed for their Practices in completing MCCD forms the Poor quality forms were observed to shrink to 28.8% from 51.7%, after training.

In the Advanced Centre for Treatment, Research & Education (ACTREC), Navi Mumbai the total participants trained in MCCD were 64, who were assessed for their knowledge in MCCD immediately after training, their outcome score rose from 777 to 993 i.e. their average outcome score rose from 12.14 to 15.51. whereas the 13 participants who were trained for the standard practices in MCCD reflected a downfall of Poor quality of MCCD forms from 86.2% to 38.5% after the training.

Similar knowledge based assessment study was conducted at B. Y. L. Nair Hospital for 11 participants where the outcome score rose from 82 to 131, thus depicting the rise in their average scores as well from 7.45 to 11.9 post training. For Pune division of Maharashtra state, with 18 participants trained, the poor quality of MCCD forms were observed to decrease from 63.3% to 43.3%, whereas their knowledge in MCCD reflected in their outcome score shooting from 549 to 642 making an average score rise from 13.07 to 15.28, post training.

When similar study conducted in Nagpur division of Maharashtra State with 86 training participants, their outcome score depicted an improvement from 957 to 1272 i.e. their average score rose from 11.12 to 14.79. While the 26 participants trained for standard practice in completing MCCD forms had the fall in Poor quality of MCCD forms from 68.5% to 45.4% after the training

Gender Equity Study

Phase-I

Dissemination of study findings (Gender Equity Phase I) with Community health workers (CHW). With the objective to strengthen the community engagement between healthcare services & the community alongside to enhance CHWs skills and understanding of gender sensitive health practices. The findings of the Gender Equity Phase-I study findings disseminated with CHWs (ASHA & ANMs) and also the study results presented and explained to the Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Sandeep Chaudhary, Varanasi by the Principal Investigator, Dr. Akash Anand (Medical Superintendent, Registrar Birth & death, MPMMCC & HBCH Varanasi) Key findings shared during the dissemination session:

- Among solid tumors, lung cancer (10.7%) was the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in males, while breast cancer (18.7%) was the leading cause in females.
- In pediatric cases, acute lymphoblastic leukemia emerged as the most common cause of cancer-related deaths.
- A higher proportion of females (42.4%) succumbed during the late or metastatic phase compared to males (30.4%).
- Study hospitals reported significantly higher mortality rates from gallbladder cancer compared to the national average.

Gender Equity Phase-II

Building upon the findings from the Gender Equity Part I study and addressing identified research gaps, a collaboration initiated with the Gender Equity Unit at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. This partnership focuses on a research project titled “Differential Healthcare-Seeking Behavior with Delayed Cancer Presentation Among Male and Female Cancer Patients.” The study aims to systematically explore gender-based disparities in healthcare-seeking behaviors among men and women presenting with cancer at advanced stages. Its primary goal is to develop evidence-based interventions to reduce delays thereby improving early cancer detection and treatment outcomes.

A Study entitled “Civil registration system (CRVS) for death registration in Uttar Pradesh & Bihar - A Quality assessment” has been submitted to Get everyone in the picture (Civil registration & Vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific) for approval.



- Please visit the Unit for Strengthening Cause of Death Data website for more information on the resources provided and additional resources

<https://tmcepi.gov.in/USCOD>

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