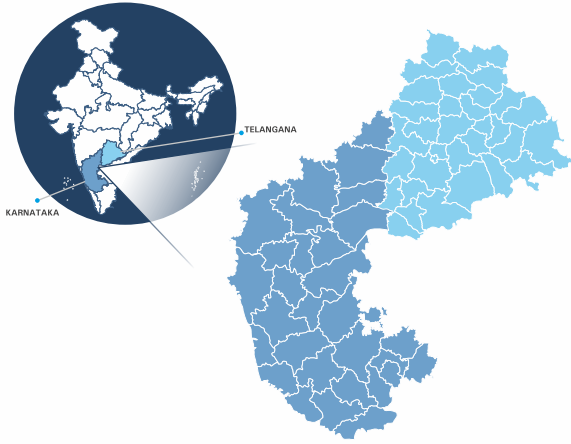


A loving hug saves lives! Promoting Kangaroo Mother Care

TELANGANA & KARNATAKA

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Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) is the care for low birth weight infants, which includes early and prolonged skin-to-skin contact with the mother (or a substitute caregiver) along with exclusive and frequent breastfeeding.

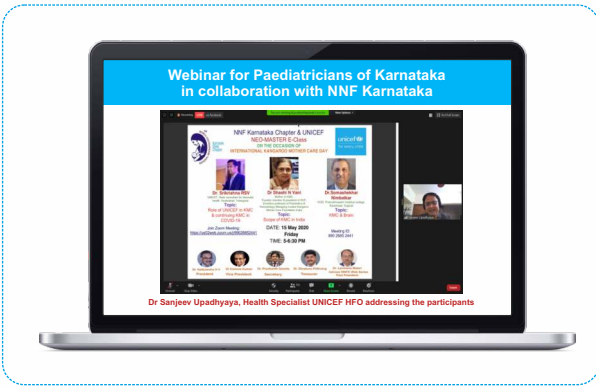
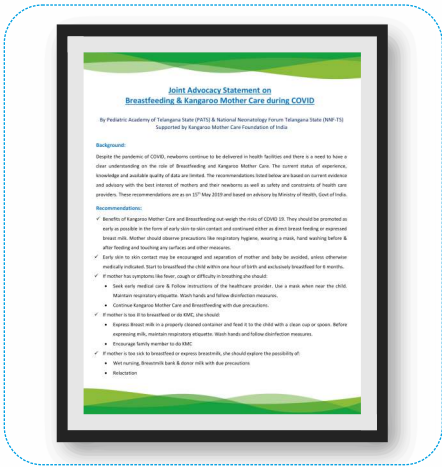


KMC is the most effective evidence-based intervention to reduce prematurity related newborn deaths and has proven to prevent up to half of all deaths in infants weighing less than 2000 gms. It is a low resource, evidence-based, high impact intervention.

However, KMC and Breastfeeding were some of the key interventions that were adversely affected by the COVID scenario. It created a sense of fear and led to unnecessary social distancing between the mother and her newborn.

KMC, the name is derived from the natural care of Kangaroo to its premature baby. The premature baby-kangaroo stays in the pouch of her mother, where it gets warmth and exclusive breastfeeding till it is mature enough to survive outside.

To address the issue, on the occasion of KMC Day-15 May 2020, UNICEF Hyderabad Field Office (HFO) collaborated with professional bodies for an advocacy campaign on KMC during COVID-19. A first of its kind, Joint Advocacy Statement was issued by Pediatric Academy of Telangana State, National Neonatology Forum (NNF) Telangana State supported by KMC Foundation of India.



A webinar for pediatricians of Karnataka in collaboration with NNF Karnataka was also organized.



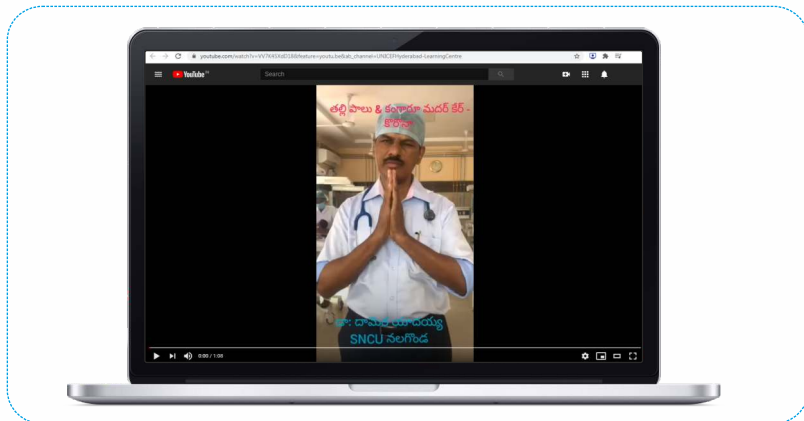
As a result, KMC was taken up on priority in several SNCUs of Telangana and Karnataka. One of them was SNCU Nalconda where special initiatives were taken up, such as mothers were provided masks and focused group discussions were done to clear the myths and misconceptions.



Not only mothers, but fathers also participated in these sessions.



Both the parents were taught the right method of holding their newborn, with direct skin-to-skin contact on parent's chest without any layers of clothing in between. They were told to hold the baby in a way where maximum eye to eye contact was possible.



A special counselling video by the SNCU nodal officer in local languages was also released, which helped in rebuilding the confidence of the caregivers.



As a result of the dedicated efforts, especially the effort of the nodal officer at SNCU Nalconda, there has been over 40 per cent increase in the KMC rates there. The hardwork and dedication of SNCU workers have proved how a loving hug can save lives.