

Ajmer: A Humbling Experience

On sunny winter morning, my trip to Ajmer on an orientation visit was one of the most enriching experiences I had recently. Around 2.5 hours from Jaipur, Ajmer is flocked by numerous people from various strata of society for religious and cultural reasons...my visit however was far from that. I was meeting new colleagues, getting an exposure to Foundation for Reproductive Health Services, India's ([FRHSI](#)) Clinical Outreach Team's (COT) operations and process.

I had learnt that Ajmer was one of the most successful teams and had delivered outstanding results in the past year and had also been recognized as a 'Model COT' in the quality assessment done by [Marie Stopes International \(MSI\)](#). I wouldn't lie, I knew that the team would be great, their reputation preceded them, but having to experience it first hand was certainly a different experience.



Clients wait in queue after registration and counseling processes in Masuda COT. Ajmer

The day for the COT was a usual one, 46 clients were waiting to get services, and by noon all the registrations were done...which I learnt was an accomplishment. This showed that the team put the clients' needs and requirements first. Most of the clients have their last meals around 8-9 PM, the earlier day and can have tea and biscuits only 2 hours after receiving services, and in order

to ensure that their fasting period does not have a toll on them, the team had a very meticulous process in place.

During my induction, I was exposed to the '[9 Steps of Quality of service delivery](#),' and in Ajmer I saw it being executed methodically.

Amidst giggling and curious eyes following me while I roamed around the CHC, I chanced to strike a conversation with a few clients and their families. "When my daughter completed her family, we were certain that we would come to MSI for family planning services. The doctors, people and overall staff are extremely caring, and I knew I wanted the best for my daughter," shared Sapna (name changed), a client's mother.

"Quality of care is the centre of our services, we are client-centered. This is the ethos of FRHSI's service delivery," shared a colleague.

This is further corroborated by a government official, “To be honest, we were a bit apprehensive about having a not-for-profit work in CHCs and PHCs, but now having worked with the FRHSI teams, we are infact confident that all procedures and methods will be followed to the T! In some cases these teams overshadow our teams in terms of operations and quality outcomes.”



A smart way to address seepage in lower part of walls, so that clients do not have a bad experience.
In pix: Glimpses of the FRHSI clinic in Ajmer

The FRHSI clinic in Ajmer was no different. The pristine setting definitely had a calming effect on me. I was also quite surprised to see the innovative ways the team used to address the problems in the clinic. To address dampness and seepage in the lower walls of the clinic, the teams had creatively covered the area. While, this might be very insignificant for many, it represents the efforts taken by FRHSI to ensure clients are exposed to the best of facilities and face no stress whatsoever.

Here I met Rimjhim (name changed) a radiant personality and a mother of three, she was at the clinic to get a Tubal Ligation as she was certain that her family size was complete. When she was being diligently briefed by our counselor on the various family planning methods, she exercised her reproductive rights and said, “*Didi hume dekho, kitni kamzoor hoon..mujhe bas eh teen achhe se palne hai..mujhe aur bacche nehi chahiye,*” Rimjhim was empowered enough to set her reproductive goals and rights, but there are thousands who aren’t aware of their SRH rights...and it is organisations like FRHS India, affiliate of MSI who sensitise women and their families and reach out to the last mile so that women can have easy and safe access to family planning services.

As a former journalist, I tend to take things with a pinch of salt, but I must say had I visited the COT in Masuda or the clinic in Ajmer in my former avatar, I would have found little fault. I shall always remember their dedication, passion and enthusiasm warmly...and it shall remind me of the purpose.

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I have recently joined the Foundation for Reproductive Health Services, India, and had an amazing opportunity to go on an orientation trip to Ajmer, Rajasthan. In Rajasthan, I had a chance to visit the Clinical Outreach Team (COT) in Masuda, where services are being delivered to the most marginalized and poorest of poor. In Ajmer, I got a chance to visit FRHSI's in-reach clinic.

To know more about FRHSI visit www.frhsi.org.in

-Debanjana Choudhuri, Sr Manager-Partnerships, FRHS India