

29<sup>th</sup> August 2017

**To: All Chief Secretaries of the States in India**

Dear Chief Secretary,

**Sub: Need for a sustainable strategic response to reduce severely wasted children in the States**

We the undersigned group of pediatricians, health professionals, nutritionists and public health professionals wish to draw your **attention and seek support** to this very critical issue regarding prevention and management of severe malnutrition in the States of India.

In this connection we wrote a [letter](#) to the Hon'ble Health Minister Sh. JP Nadda. He has kindly responded with the stand of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare that concluded, "...*Ministry of Health and Family Welfare considers that management of children with SAM requires a comprehensive family centric approach involving caregivers instead of a food centric approach...*" and considers that RUTF is "temporarily helpful in nutritional rehabilitation" and "...*may not benefit a common household in developing appropriate food habits for children as against the home augmented foods...*".

Much as we are concerned about the morbidity and mortality of children suffering from malnutrition, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India has stated clearly how to deal with such situations. We are pleased to share with you the complete response received from Sh. JP Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare.

We have reviewed the Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) programme being run in 6 States i.e. Gujarat, Jharkhand, MP, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan and note that it is primarily relying on RUTFs. We wish to state that these are not sustainable.

We would like you to direct the ministry of WCD and Health in your state to construct a sustainable strategic this problem, which includes i) reducing the number of SAM children every year through prevention, ii) manage those afflicted by providing home augmented foods (*The family gets locally available and acceptable cereals and pulses, sugar, oil, milk and eggs, as defined in the [Indian trial](#)*) along with health and home based care.

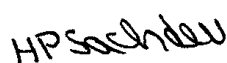
There are ample experiences from the field that such an approach works. We would be happy to engage with you in this direction.

Look forward to a positive response from you.


With many thanks and regards,



Keshav Desiraju  
Former Secretary Health  
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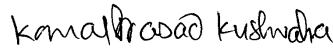
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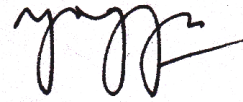
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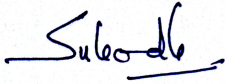
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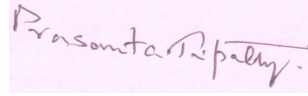
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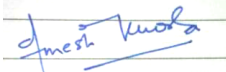
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