

## **Doctor shortage hits PHCs in Mysuru; DHO promises to fill vacancies**

Absence of doctors in many Primary Health Centres (PHCs) is forcing people in rural parts of Mysuru to travel several kilometres to get medical help.

Puttanna, Ramachandra and Girish of Bettadapura and Nandinathuru villages in Periyapatna taluk told The Hindu that they are having visit the taluk hospital in Periyapatna to avail treatment. In fact, they said they have seen scores of people from other villages going to Periyapatna town or to Mysuru to get medical help.

Similarly, according to Lakshme Gowda, Sunil and Chethan of Kodulupura and Devanur villages in Nanjangud taluk, there is no doctor at the PHCs in these villages either. This means they have to shell out a couple of hundred rupees to even get to another PHC or taluk hospital.

When contacted, District Health Officer Basavaraj accepted that as many as 16 PHCs have been functioning without a doctor for sometime now. This includes five PHCs in Periyapatna taluk, two each in Hunsur and K.R. Nagar taluks, five in Nanjangud taluk, and one each in H.D. Kote and T. Narsipur taluks.

‘Arrangements made’

He, however, claimed that alternative arrangements have been made in such villages by deputing doctors from neighbouring PHCs or nearby taluk hospitals. He said that the doctors who have been deputed to other PHCs visit them twice a week and are always on call for emergencies.

Dr. Basavaraj said walk-in interviews will be held from Monday to appoint doctors to all the PHCs in the district. They would have to work on contract basis and will be paid a consolidated amount of Rs.40,000. He added that though a decent salary is being offered, many junior doctors have not been showing interest in working in PHCs.

There are 148 PHCs, 10 community health centres and six taluk hospitals in the district.