

Positive Deviants, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

This family consisting of a mother (65), two daughters (25 and 27) and a son (24) migrated from Gujarat to Jaipur for the treatment of their son suffering from cancer. The family faced great ordeals in Jaipur; moving from one hospital to another in trying to get treatment for the son and the situation was compounded by other problems. Having migrated they found it difficult to apply for citizenship entitlements like Unique Identification Number or Aadhar and ration card, which in turn made it difficult for them to apply for the state government's health insurance scheme. The son soon passed away due to lack of proper treatment.

Soon the mother also got infected with throat cancer. They settled in Badodia basti, in a small tent near the drainage canal (Naala). There have no toilet facility, no electricity, and no supply of drinking water. They have to eat and sleep in the small tent by the drainage canal. The two girls are the bread earners of the family; they barter small steel vessels in return for old clothes and that is recycled and through these meagre earnings, take care of their mother.

Despite the many problems and lack of basic facilities, they are the quintessential 'positive deviants' that you find across resource-poor setting. They keep their tent clean, get their drinking water from the nearby pipe line and store it in clean vessels and boil and filter the water. The family uses the nearby community toilet in Swami Basti and in emergency use the neighbor's toilets.

The girls are aware of menstrual hygiene practices and use sanitary pads. The challenge is to go to the community toilet at night. They are also quite aware of the importance of handwash

They have been approaching many leaders and officials to provide them basic facilities but nothing has materialized, so far, but given their determination and grit they are not willing to give up hope of seeing better times

-Narrated by Sumitra

