Consumer Rights Campaign on the Importance of Aadhaar and Mobile Seeding with Ration Card at Nongspung Village on May 10, 2019

Department of Social Work, Martin Luther Christian University has been conducting various consumer rights campaigns for the past five to six years in collaboration with the Deputy Commissioner (Supply), East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya. The current objective of this campaign, apart from others, is to generate awareness among communities on the importance of Aadhar and Mobile Seeding with Ration Card to ensure transparency in the Public Distribution System. It was a two days programme where the students performed a Role Play to generate awareness on the importance of the topic which was done by the BSW 2018 Batch when they were in their 2nd Semester.

Before conducting the programme, the students mobilized the community by chanting the ‘Phawer’ along with a flash mob in the main centre/bazaar of the village. To add more to the role play, Mr JM Jala, from Weights and Measures Department of the Government of Meghalaya oriented the audience on the rights of a consumer, specifically in relation to the
importance of Legal Metrology Act. He stated that the Act enforces the standards of Weights and Measures, regulated trade and consumers’ rights to weights, measures and other goods which are sold or distributed. Furthermore, Mr. Shaikupar War from the Directorate of Food Civil Supply and Consumer Affair Department spoke on the initiatives taken by the Government of India to encourage transparency in the Public Distribution System (PDS). In addition to the above activities, wall painting on the theme, skit competitions among the different schools around Nongspung areas were
Nongspung Presbyterian Secondary School performing their skit

Mary Fatima Secondary School performing their skit
Street Play on Drug Abuse
Organized by Senior Christian Endeavour Society
Mawprem at Mawprem, Shillong on August 30, 2018

On August 30, 2018, the Senior Christian Endeavour Society, Mawprem invited the Department of Social Work, Martin Luther Christian University to perform a street play on Drug Abuse at Lower Mawprem, Kyrbom with the objective of garnering public awareness on the ill/harmful effects of Drug Abuse.

The street play performed by the MSW 2017 Batch started off with mobilizing the crowd through songs and activities designed by the students themselves. After mobilization, the programme started with a short introduction of the event followed by the performance of the street play.

The street play depicted the distressing life of a young female adult who was suffering from emotional and mental disturbances due to consumption of drugs. It also showcased how drug addiction had an impact not only on the individual but the family as well. Peer pressure was also another element that was depicted in the street play. However, although drugs are a menace to the society, the individual taking drugs can still be saved, through early intervention of a multifaceted nature.

The programme concluded with a brief talk by Rev B. Dkhar, Pastor in-charge Lumkshaid Church, who spoke about the causative factors of drug addiction and the important role that family members play along with the society in its entirety. He also gave examples based on various cases that he encountered when counselling young adults and adolescents who were abusing drugs. He urged and requested everyone to join hands in eradicating the menace of drug abuse by supporting, showing love and care and timely diagnosis and treatment to individuals suffering from drug addiction.

Empowering Women through Entrepreneurship organized by the National Commission for Women on March 15, 2019

The programme on “Empowering Women through Entrepreneurship” was an initiative taken by the National Commission for Women (NWC) to empower women for entrepreneurial enterprises and to encourage young students to initiate and venture into employment in different fields/sectors apart from government employment. The objective of the programme
is economic empowerment of women as it was believed that when women are empowered economically, their contribution in the society will be recognized, their dignity will be respected and will also support in strengthening women’s rights and ensure gender equality. It was also highlighted that such program is needed to be organized in the rural areas to equip them with knowledge and strategies on becoming an entrepreneur. The difficulties that women face, usually confounding circumstances in becoming entrepreneurs due to lack of information and lack of financial assistance was discussed. Additionally, studies found that there are 43% of women who face difficulty in starting up their own enterprise and the reasons identified are due to low self-confidence, lack of family support, lack of government support, poverty, lack of business knowledge and insecurity.

Empowering women in India is still a huge challenge because of the strong gender roles that have been instilled into the psyche of mainstream societies where women continue to be perceived as homemakers and having very limited access to decision making at their home. Through the different success stories and the panel discussion it, can be said that to start up any business, one should have a passion, commitment, support of family, friends, investors who believe in the venture. It was observed by the students who attended the programme that though various speakers have their different areas of expertise and opinions, one common thing the resource persons showed, in the form of passion was the commitment to help the larger community in fulfilling the gap that is there in the society in terms of economy.

Moreover, it was also highlighted that to start up a business, one should understand the need of the customer and the world scenario. Therefore, it is important that women should be exposed to the knowledge of the internet and social media to enable them to be techno savvy. Further, the presenters also mentioned that there was a lack of awareness on the availability of schemes provided by the government and hence, most of the deserving women do not get access to it.

To conclude, it can be said that women should be provided with platforms to link with national and international entrepreneurs, provide awareness programmes on business and and relevant financial institutions, establishment of self-help groups, a sea change towards business attitude , and exposure to knowledge of the information technology. To sum up this programme, empowering a woman means empowering a family and the nation as a whole as women spend a whopping 90% of their income on the welfare of their families.
World Social Work Day

The World Social Work Day is celebrated each year on the Third Tuesday of each March. This year, it fell on March 19, 2019. The 2019 World Social Work Day highlighted the universally adopted theme ‘Promoting the Importance of Human Relationships’ and also in concordance with the International Federation of Social Workers which stipulated the day where social workers around the world unite together to celebrate the achievements and profession and the appreciation of Social Work as a distinguished profession. The Department took this initiative with the hope that social workers around the world take this theme to their respective communities, workplace and to the government in raising awareness of the social work contributions and the need for further action. The Department of Social Work of Martin Luther Christian University also celebrated this year in the University held a programme in the MLCU Hall in the presence of Dr. Glenn C Kharkongor, Chancellor, Dr. Vincent T. Darlong, Vice Chancellor of the University along with few associated NGOs from Shillong. The Department celebrated this event with the achievement of the recently concluded community camp at Thyllaw Village, East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya whereby Mr Wankmenlang Kharbuli and Mr Emideiwahun Rangad, Faculty of the Department of Social Work presented the findings and activities of the Community Camp, 2019. Further, to enlighten the celebration, the students performed two role plays on the theme which also showcased how Social Workers can take multi-disciplinary approaches in helping communities. To illuminate the celebration, the MSW 2018 Batch displayed a role play on the folk tale among the Khasi community on ‘U klew bad ka sngr’ which depicted on the folklore of how a cock helped in bringing sunlight again to the world after the Sun refused to shine for humanity. In addition, one of the students shared his experiences and how
Social Work has changed and moulded him into a better person and brought him closer to his personal environment and eventual society through the experiential learning he had experienced and practised. Dr. Vincent Darlong, Vice Chancellor of the University ended the programme with his esteemed thoughts and insights relating the tribal communities across the globe which ought to be based on human relationship. The VC stressed that one of the assets that tribal community has is social capital and human relationship which is the basic foundation of a sound social capital.

**Mental Health Interventions in School Settings**

The BSW 2017 Batch, who had opted for a Major in Mental Health, organized and planned for Mental Health Interventions in School Settings, targeting adolescents with the objective of enabling students to plan and organise initiatives at the Community level and in School Settings. The topics covered for the sensitization programme ranged from Suicidal Ideation and its Prevention, Stress and Its Management, Anger Management, Stigma in Mental Health and Interpersonal Skills. There are five schools that are being provided with this service in and around...
Nongrah, Shillong and we are open to high schools, higher secondary schools and colleges which need such services.

Activity during Interpersonal Skill taken by Ms Wa era D Shylla

Dr Lindsay Murray M Sangma taking a session on Suicidal Ideation and its Prevention
Ms Nadeen Pakyntein taking a session on Stigma in Mental Health and its Prevention

Ms Wa era D Shylla taking a session on Anger Management

Play Performance during Swachhta Pakhwada

The Social Work Department participated actively during the Conference-cum-Workshop on Swachhta (Cleanliness) during the Swachhta Pakhwada on April 5th, 2019 at NEIGRIHMS. Students from BSW 4th Semester participated in the Play Competition on the topic ‘Health and Sanitation’ where they bagged the auspicious award of the ‘Best Play/Act’, thereby adjudged the best among more than 10 groups from different educational and medical institutions which participated in the programme. We were the outstanding champions!! Apart from this accolade, the conference also imparted imperative information on healthcare facilities, cleanliness of hospital premises and waste disposal facilities. MLCU made a huge impact on health facilities through the play and continuous collaboration with various departments of NEIGRIHMS.
**Street Play on Rashtriya Poshaan Maah**

**In collaboration with the Office of the District Programme Officer ICDS(Cell), East Khasi Hills**

**Date: 21st of September 2018**

**Venue: Motphran, Meghalaya**

Poshaan Abhiyan (National Nutrition Mission) is India’s flagship programme launched in March 2018 to improve nutritional status of children up to 6 years, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers to achieve specific targets for reduction in low birth weight babies, stunting growth, under nutrition and prevalence of anaemia over the next 3 years (www.nhp.gov.in/rashtriya-poshaan-maah_pg). With this in mind, the Office of the District Programme Officer ICDS (Cell), collaborated with the Department of Social Work, MLCU for a Street Play to educate and provide awareness to the public on “Poshaan Maah”.

The programme started at 11:00 AM with a Phawer sung by the students from the Music Department, Martin Luther Christian University related to Nutrition for mobilizing the crowd. The Phawer lyric was in the local dialect which conveyed message about the Poshaan Maah being celebrated the whole month on the importance of a mother’s breast milk during the first two years of life. It also carried a message about the importance of eating healthy and nutritious food.

Following this, a short opening speech was given by Smt. D.V. Massar, District Programme Officer ICDS (Cell) which was followed by a Street Play displayed by the BSW 2016 Batch. The target of the Street Play was the public, both young and old, especially mothers and local vendors who frequent the market place. The Role Play showcased the difference in health outcomes of two families: one family that followed a healthy lifestyle and another that did not. The Street Play then concluded with a short speech from Ms Nandarisis Marwein, a faculty of the Department of...
Social Work, Martin Luther Christian University where she spoke about the importance of consuming green leafy vegetables especially those that are locally available and the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Speech on Nutrition by Ms Nandaris Marwein, Faculty, Department of Social Work, Martin Luther Christian University

Street Play performed by the BSW 2016 Batch, Department of Social Work, Martin Luther Christian University
A study Tour is an essential aspect of the experiential learning of social work education. The Department organizes study tours outside the state for the BSW and MSW final year students every year. Important institutional and organizational visits are organized. Their office structures, procedures, methods, social services, social work practices and contribution to the society at large are studied. Besides institutional visits, students are generally exposed to other issues in urban areas such as increasing urban poverty, population, slums, environmental issues and others.

Inclusion of Study Tour in our Academic Curriculum plays a crucial role in providing an opportunity to students to execute and enhance their skills, knowledge and competencies with self-development and actualization to be a professional social worker after successful completion of their respective courses. The medical sectors, NGOs and other fields of practices which are selected were scrutinized before conducting visits so that students should grasp, benefit and learn the most significant components of social work at every level of practice. Another crucial significance of Study Tour is to aid or help the students in identifying organizations for their internships during their final semesters. Proper supporting materials have always been provided for effective utility of this activity. With varied knowledge about different organizations and getting immersed into the speeches of prominent and eminent personalities engaged in the actual practice of social workers in myriad settings, the students are expected to develop knowledge and understanding of problems and interventions in the diverse fields of practice. Another aim is to inculcate the spirit of team work and develop group living and cooperation which will ultimately translate into success and ability to perform well in actual practice as well as their lives. The objectives of this particular study tour were to enable the students to acquire a greater understanding of
Kolkata by providing insights into economic, political and cultural life in Kolkata, enhance the perspectives of students about emerging forms of social issues in various contexts and to learn about new concepts, approaches and methods of interventions in tackling specific issues and problems. The various organizations visited were Mother House, Hope Kolkata Foundation (HKF), Samaritan Mission School and Parichiti. During the tour, after each organizational visit, the students were asked to reflect on the learning outcomes of the visits; their expectations, experiences and actual learning. Students were divided into groups under the supervision of a faculty where they shared their learning within their respective groups at the end of each day. The debriefing sessions helped consolidate the learning of the students in relation to their understanding social work practice and relevance.

**Workshop on Psychotherapy**  
**Social Work Department**  
**Martin Luther Christian University**

Counseling is a cooperative and collaborative effort between a counselor and a client where the counselor helps and guides the client in addressing problems that she/he may be facing. The social worker attempts to make it possible for the client to face and change her/his problem through a warm, accepting and understanding relationship. Relationship, in counselling, interpreted as one person interacting with another, is at the heart of all social work in health and social care settings. Counseling and communication skills are used every day to build such relationships in order for the work to happen. Social workers are to promote
change and enhance the wellbeing of the people. Psychotherapy is a means to aid social workers in achieving the goals of helping individuals. It is also a means to help individuals with different types of mental illnesses in their ability to cope and adjust with the problems that the client is facing. Psychotherapy can help eliminate or control symptoms that a client is facing and this will help the client function better in his environment.

For this workshop, students of the MSW 2017 batch were introduced to the concept of Psychotherapies within different approaches and to the concept of referral, as part of the syllabus. It was required that students are able to understand and comprehend the different therapeutic approaches and at the same time learn the importance of referral of clients. Based on the syllabus, experts from the field of counseling were invited to share their knowledge and experience on the following topics:

- Introduction to Psychotherapy, objectives of Psychotherapies, Counselling and Psychotherapy, Therapeutic process, the use of Psychotherapy in Social Work Practice, understand the concept of referral and the use of referral in different situations, Types of Mental Health Professionals and their roles
- Psychodynamic Approaches
- Cognitive Behavioural Approaches
- Existential Humanistic Approaches
- Contemporary Psychodynamic and Psychotherapies

Workshop on Training of Trainers on Palliative Care based on the theme “Quality End of Life Care – We will make it happen”, organised by the Palliative Care Unit, NEIGRIHMS on February 20 – February 21, 2019

The World Health Organisation defines palliative care as “an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problem associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual”.

It further defines that palliative care in the following way:

Palliative Care…….
“Provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms; affirms life and regards dying as a normal process; intends neither to hasten or postpone death; integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care; offers a support system to help patients live as actively as possible until death; offers a support system to help the family cope during the patients illness and in their own bereavement; uses a team approach to address the needs of patients and their families, including bereavement counselling, if indicated; will enhance quality of life, and may also positively influence the course of illness; is applicable early in the course of illness, in conjunction with other therapies that are intended to prolong life, such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy, and includes those investigations needed to better understand and manage distressing clinical complications”.

A workshop on Training of Trainers on Palliative Care with the theme “Quality End of Life Care – We will make it happen” was organised by the Palliative Care Unit, NEIGRIHMS on 20–21 February, 2019. The workshop was attended by MSW 2017 batch when they were in the 4th Semester Students (Public Health Specialization) accompanied by two faculty, viz. Mr. Emideiwahun K Rangad, Asst. Professor and Ms. Nadeen Pakyntein, Asst. Professor. The programme started with the inauguration where the Director of NEIGRIHMS delivered his speech. During this two days’ workshop, the topic that was covered during the training was Wound Care Management in Cancer Patient facilitated by Dr. Donkupar Khongwir who stated the different categories of wound healing.

Ms. Gilly Burn, Director, CRI facilitated a session on ‘Breaking Bad News’ where she highlighted things to initiate while breaking bad news like 1. Prepare people mentally when breaking bad news, 2. Communication is the key, 3. Compassionate communication, 4. Be gentle with the truth, 5. Give warning shots, 6. If requested, explain to the patients, 7. Encourage ventilation, 8. Offer availability. Later in the workshop, a sample video of how to break bad news was shown and participants were able to observe the process the needful to do when breaking bad news. Further, Ms. Sandra Lywait, Nursing Officer, NEIGRIHMS, delivered a session on Pain Assessment in Palliative Care. Dr. Samarjit Dey, Asst. Prof., Department of Anaesthesiology, NEIGRIHMS highlighted the issue of Strategies in Pain Management.

On the 2nd day, Ms. Bashisha Chyne, Medical Social Worker, Palliative Care Unit, NEIGRIHMS, spoke about Spirituality in Palliative Care where she stated that it helped in
building a relationship and trust. She further said that spiritual care is the care for the human spirit where attitude, behaviour and compassion of the patients was shaped and moulded. Spiritual care is also the dialogue that the patient is conversing with their inner spirit. Spiritual assessment was also highlighted during her session.

Ms. Gilly Burn, also initiated a discussion on certain cases related to cancer and there was a debated session related to Euthanasia that was facilitated by Prof. Prithwis Bhattacharyya and Ms. Gilly Burn.

**Community Camp at Thyllaw Village, Mawsynram Block, East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya**

The Department of Social Work, Martin Luther Christian University as part of the experiential learning conducts the mandatory Community Camp each year. The last community camp of the academic session was held at Thyllaw Village from March 11, 2019 till March 16, 2019. The objective of the Camp was to acquaint students with the rural life situations, the community social structure and working culture and introduction to life in a community. The Community Camp envisaged at enabling students to develop the skills of conducting baseline survey and also to enable them to analyse and intervene into the issues existing in the community and
to enable them develop skills of working with the community. Also, as part of the curriculum, the students of Master in Social Work 2nd Semester and Bachelor in Social Work 4th Semester are exposed and engaged at the community level by realistic interaction with people living in rural areas. During the one week camp, the students were engaged in different activities *viz.* participatory rural appraisals, home visits, baseline survey, focused group discussions, awareness programmes in schools and the community at large, career counselling and life skills sessions with children and adolescents among Thyllaw and Mawsynram communities. Presentations were made based on the baseline survey conducted in the village where members of the community were present. Different issues where highlighted and the felt needs were prioritized with the community people. Various interventions were conducted based on the findings where people of the village were actively involved and consulted. The one week long community camp was ended with the health camp and cultural activities in the community.
Awareness on ‘Child Sexual Abuse’ held at Mawngap, organised by Child Line, Shillong in collaboration with the Department of Social Work, MLCU

The Awareness Programme on Child Sexual Abuse was organized by Child Line, Shillong in collaboration with the Department of Social Work, Martin Luther Christian University on November 11, 2018 at Mawngap, East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya. Following the order of the programme, a short speech was delivered by the coordinator of ChildLine where she addressed the issues of child sexual abuse and also highlighted the different Laws and Acts pertaining to safeguarding the interest of the child. She also sensitised the general public about POCSO and highlighted the procedures of reporting the matter to the concerned and responsible authorities. Further, the police in-charge of the Mawngap outpost highlighted the role of police in addressing and tackling the issues of child sexual abuse. Additionally, the students from the department of Social Work (BSW 1st Semester & MSW 1st Semester) enacted a Street Play where they portrayed the issue on child sexual abuse.
Through the Street Play, the students were able to bring in the components of reporting the abuse (physical or sexual) to the ChildLine using a toll free number 1098. The students also displayed chart works that contained information related to child sexual abuse and POCSO Act.