

# COUNTRY FACT SHEET INDIA

## WHERE WE WORK AND WHY IT MATTERS

Children's HeartLink focuses on building capacity within health care systems to best serve children born with congenital heart disease (CHD). With 250,000 babies born with congenital heart disease annually\* and only 1 in 10 receiving optimal care, there is a critical need for equitable access to life changing treatment. Our approach around sustainable health systems strengthening focuses on increasing clinical and administrative capacity and supporting advanced medical education.

### The 3rd leading cause of infant mortality is CHD

- **1 in 100 babies** is born with congenital heart disease
- **90% of the ~60,000** critical congenital heart disease procedures needed annually for newborns and infants go unperformed
- **Less than 100 centers** provide pediatric cardiac care, but geographic distribution is uneven
- **275 pediatric cardiologists** serve a population of 1.43 billion, compared to 72 in the USA at Boston Children's Hospital alone\*\*

## ALL CHILDREN DESERVE ACCESS TO HEART CARE

Our vision is simple: all children should have access to high-quality heart care. To achieve this, we establish long-lasting partnerships with local stakeholders including health care professionals, clinic administrators and government officials to increase awareness of the need for pediatric cardiac care. Our focus is on building clinical and organizational skills to ensure access to the highest quality pediatric cardiac care for all children in need.



*"The partnership with Children's HeartLink promotes not only the surgeon, but the entire crew of the team to scale up. Children's HeartLink's facilitators bring the volunteers to the centers where local surgeons can learn the techniques and then help the poor patients to hundred percent."*

- Dr. Raju Vijayakumar, Chief of Pediatric Cardiac Surgery at G. Kuppuswamy Naidu Memorial Hospital



In 2024, surgeons and perfusionists from India and Vietnam trained at **Amrita Hospital Kochi**, a Children's HeartLink Center of Excellence. The training, led by medical volunteers Dr. Mohan Reddy and Clinton Jones from the University of California San Francisco, focused on best practices for unifocalization. Participants had the opportunity to learn, collaborate and perform procedures together, fostering knowledge exchange and skill-building. The training exemplifies the power of Children's HeartLink Centers of Excellence in equipping pediatric cardiac specialists in low-resource settings to treat more children, faster.



## CHILDREN'S HEARTLINK CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

Children's HeartLink Centers of Excellence serve as sustainable centers to train and mentor others in India, Central Asia and Africa, influence government and advocate for the best care possible for children with CHD. There are two Children's HeartLink Centers of Excellence in India.

### Amrita Hospital

Amrita Hospital, Kochi was a key partner in Children's HeartLink's efforts with the Government of Kerala to increase access and improve pediatric cardiac care at public hospitals. These efforts in the state helped significantly reduce infant mortality rates from CHD.

### Narayana Hrudayalaya Institute of Cardiac Sciences

Narayana Hrudayalaya Institute of Cardiac Sciences was the first hospital in India to have the Children's HeartLink Nurse Residency Program in person and implement Parent Education Discharge Instructions (PEDI).

## HOSPITAL PARTNERS

Children's HeartLink hospital partner move through a three-phased structured process that builds clinical capacity in regions where there are large disparities in access to heart care.

**Amrita Hospital, Faridabad** seeks to double the number of children they can reach by scaling services, integrating and coordinating clinical care, advancing research and strengthening training and education initiatives. Partner since 2023.

**Children Served: 1,646**

Volunteer Team: Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

### G. Kuppusamy Naidu Memorial Hospital

in Coimbatore increased its pediatric heart surgeries by 73% in the first six years of its partnership with Children's HeartLink. Partner since 2017.

**Children Served: 4,472**

Volunteer Team: Mayo Clinic, Minnesota

**Narayana Superspecialty Hospital** in Howrah leads Continuing Medical Education (CME) sessions for their peers in West Bengal. The CME sessions cover all subspecialties in pediatric cardiac care. Partner since 2019.

**Children Served: 6,050**

Volunteer Team: Children's Minnesota, Minnesota

**Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research** in Chandigarh, northwestern India, a severely underserved region, has reduced the mortality rate after pediatric heart surgery to 5.1%. Partner since 2012.

**Children Served: 6,593**

Volunteer Team: Boston Children's Hospital, Massachusetts

**Rabindranath Tagore International Institute of Cardiac Sciences** in Kolkata became the first hospital in West Bengal state to create a nurse educator position in the cardiac unit. Partner since 2015.

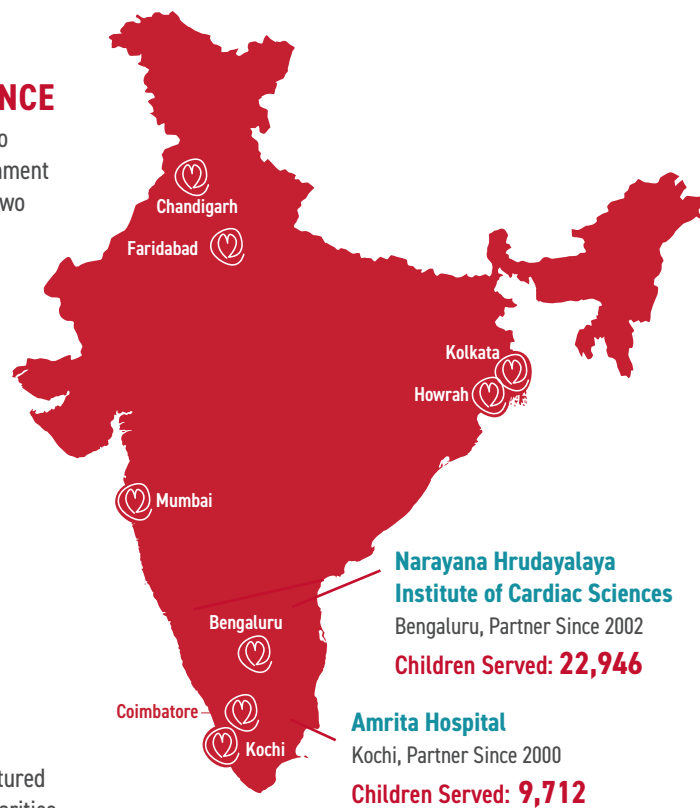
**Children Served: 10,009**

Volunteer Team: Children's Minnesota, Minnesota

**Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Centre for Child Heart Care** in Mumbai, an exclusive pediatric cardiac care center, aims to enhance surgical skills, provide multidisciplinary care and establish itself as a regional trainer. Partner since 2023.

**Children Served: 7,699**

Volunteer Team: Children's Mercy Kansas City Hospital, Missouri



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\*UNICEF; based on estimates of 1% of all births with CHD

\*\* Current career perspective of pediatric cardiologists in India. Sachdeva, Dhulipudi. Annals of Pediatric Cardiology, 2023  
Children served reflects the number of children reached in 2023