

## *Editorial*

*A woman's health is her capital.*

**-Harriet Beecher Stowe**

To a society that nurtures equality, gender equality is no longer a woman's issue but a human issue that affects all. For a reformed society, life is not a competition between men and women, it runs in collaboration. A more inclusive society cares equally for the young, old and the helpless. Women's health today is deemed a global issue and the very concept of 'women's health' has become so immensely entrenched that its very own nature can neither be precisely defined nor accurately redefined. We may attempt to settle ourselves with the key or recurrent issues like mental health, reproductive health, maternal mortality and still add along the nature of health service provision (while it is impossible to name them all). In discerning the status of women's health and wellness, earth, culture and community are apparently strong factors that keep most women entwined and deprived of the minimum healthcare. This in turn prompts overarching questions of development in the field of health and medical sciences facilities. As a developing country, one might wonder how India still has an alarmingly high rate of malnourished women, suicide and Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) unlike many others. The seventh volume of Srotaswini attempts to reflect this breath by offering research papers and articles which explore the multiple contexts to highlight women's health as well as specific health questions.

Through the lens of a multidisciplinary approach, researchers have deliberated on highly crucial points that mirror the stark difference between regular health care and women's health care. The papers can be linked by various points: women's experience behind four walls and beyond, the call for women's health priorities and interventions, women's health services and their autonomy in decision making for health care. The undercurrent here cannot be ignored be for long-as individuals/part of societies who are excluded from all important decision making, who have lesser opportunities to employment while bearing most

responsibility for family life, health reform should begin by putting women first. For this, we all need to travel a long road from the battlefield to the peace table. Perhaps, safe water supply may be good to start with and a respectful treatment from health workers in the later part. The research articles in this edition lean on all types of research possible to draw insights into and also to generate empirical evidence to prioritize and protect women's health. In addition, it finds discussions and suggestions of various traditional methods and indigenous practices by women themselves to promote the wellness of women in particular. Further reading of the papers implicitly speaks of our own limitations in understanding these health related problems as real and serious.

We conspicuously lie at crossroads and before us is a long way for all till we reach the point of a shared perspective on women's health across the globe, no matter how different cultures may be. Extraordinary determination from ordinary men and women would suffice to make the impossible possible. We sincerely hope that this volume will help in not just articulating but also stimulating interest in women's health and wellness and finds its way in the process of networking, debating and slowly towards the creation of an empowered society; a society where every woman is rich with health as her wealth.

***Jt. Editors***

*Dr. Rashmi Rekha Saikia*

*Lalsanlevis Nampui*