

# COMMUNITY MEDICINE AS A SPECIALTY BRANCH MUST ASSUME NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

*Posted on April 25, 2021 by Dr Edmond Fernandes*



Category: [Opinion](#)

MD in Community Medicine has been a branch in private confines in the previous decade and post-Independence India. It has necessarily started to bloom at the speed of light in this decade and it is of full-blown national importance now more than ever before with a COVID-19 like pandemic bringing the world to the brink of collapse.

I grew up in a mega city of Mumbai where health inequity and health inequality was staring at my face. The 2005 Mumbai flooding was a living example of survival. Back then I had no idea at the kind of life I was seeking to live and what solutions were needed. Years have gone by and now with [cascading risks](#) facing India and also rest of the world, it is that time of the day when Community Medicine physicians put their degree to greater use. It is time that they move from the private confines of their chambers onto the field, it is time that they stop citing NMC (Erstwhile MCI) inspections and actually respond to the call of duty.

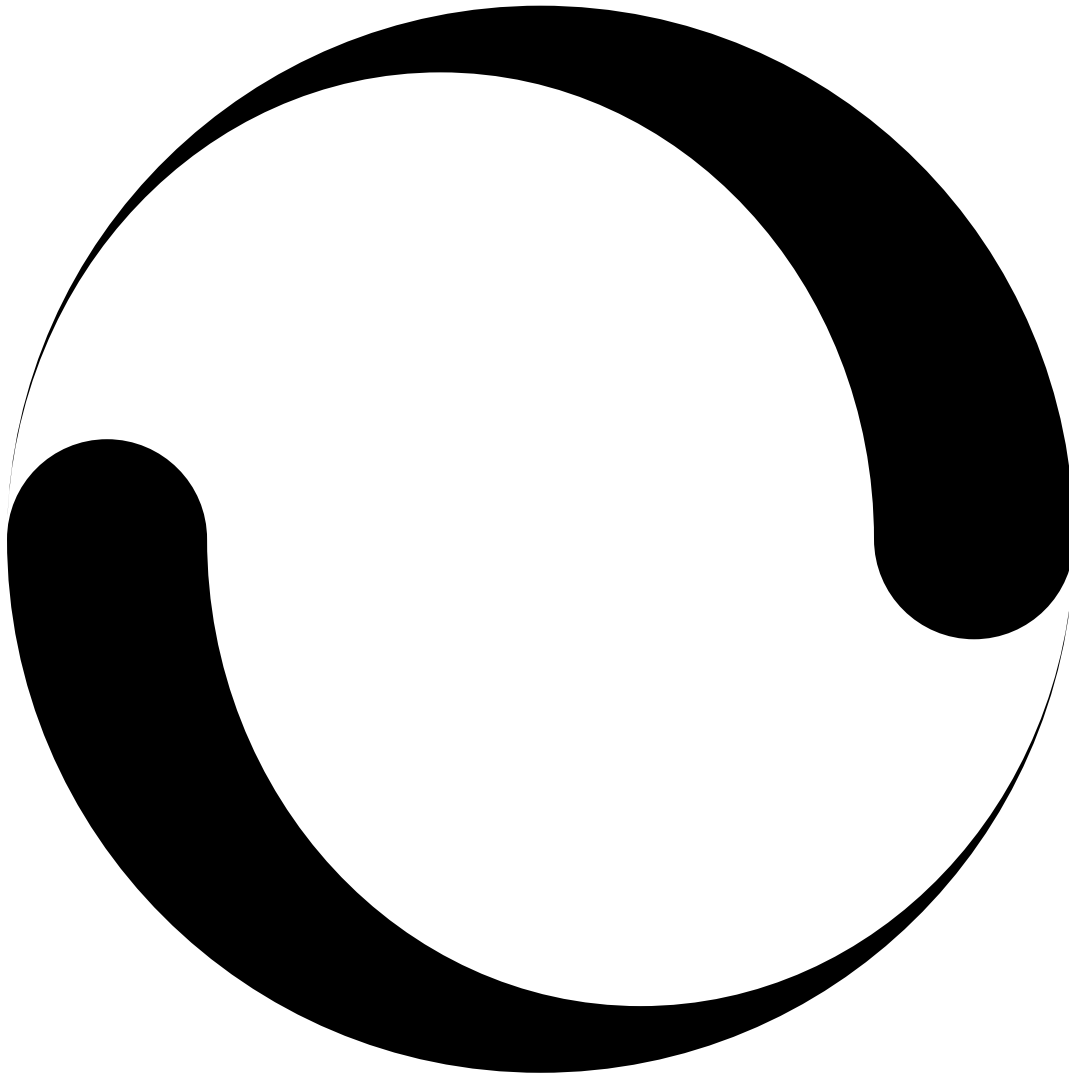
Today, India has become a center of attraction to the world on how a classical public health system can collapse, this correction needs to be brought out by MD – Community Medicine colleagues,

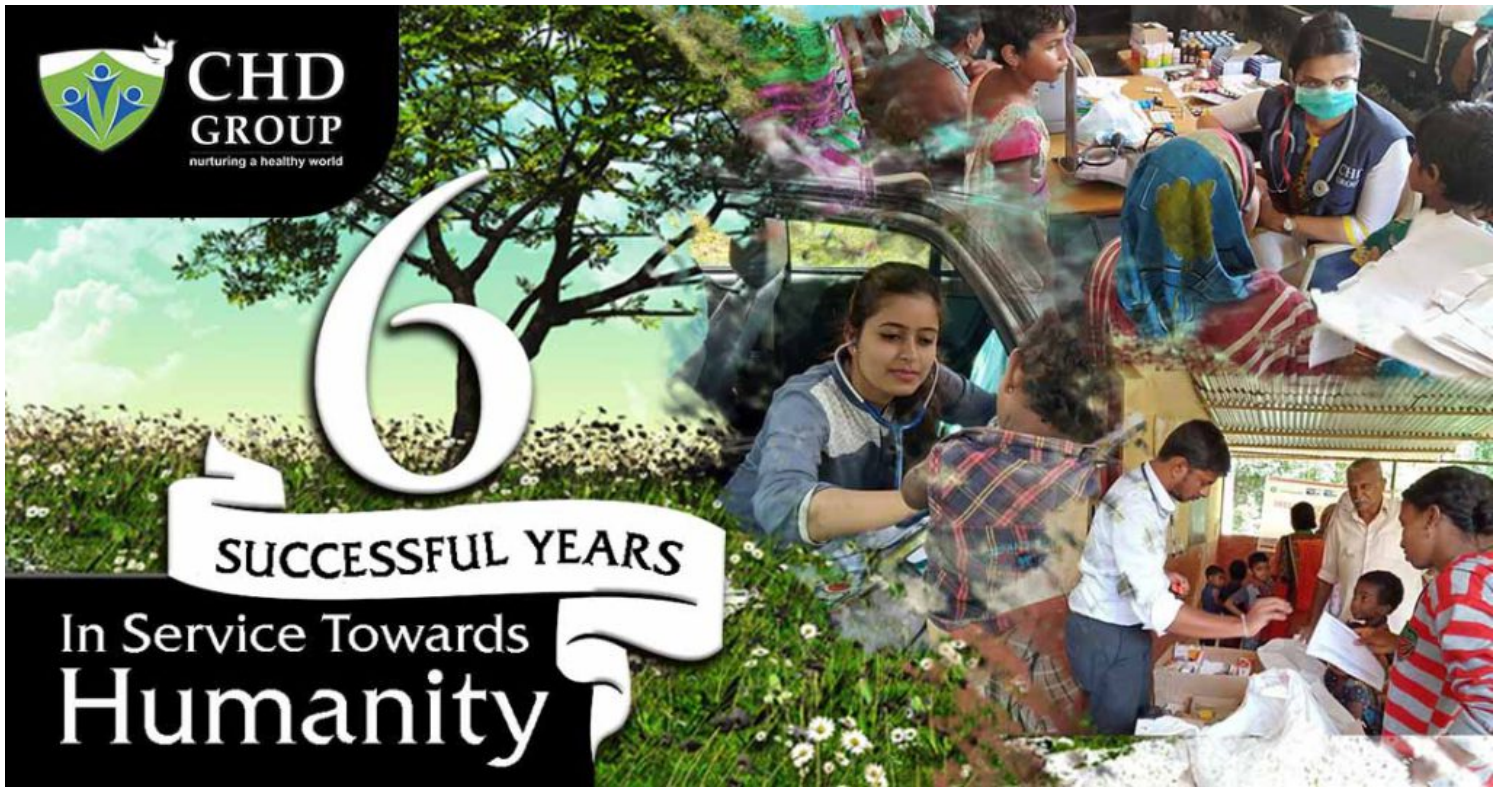
along with public health professionals. Natural Disasters- Climate Change – Pandemics have devastating public health consequences and this nexus can only be mitigated by committed community health physicians being more committed and active.

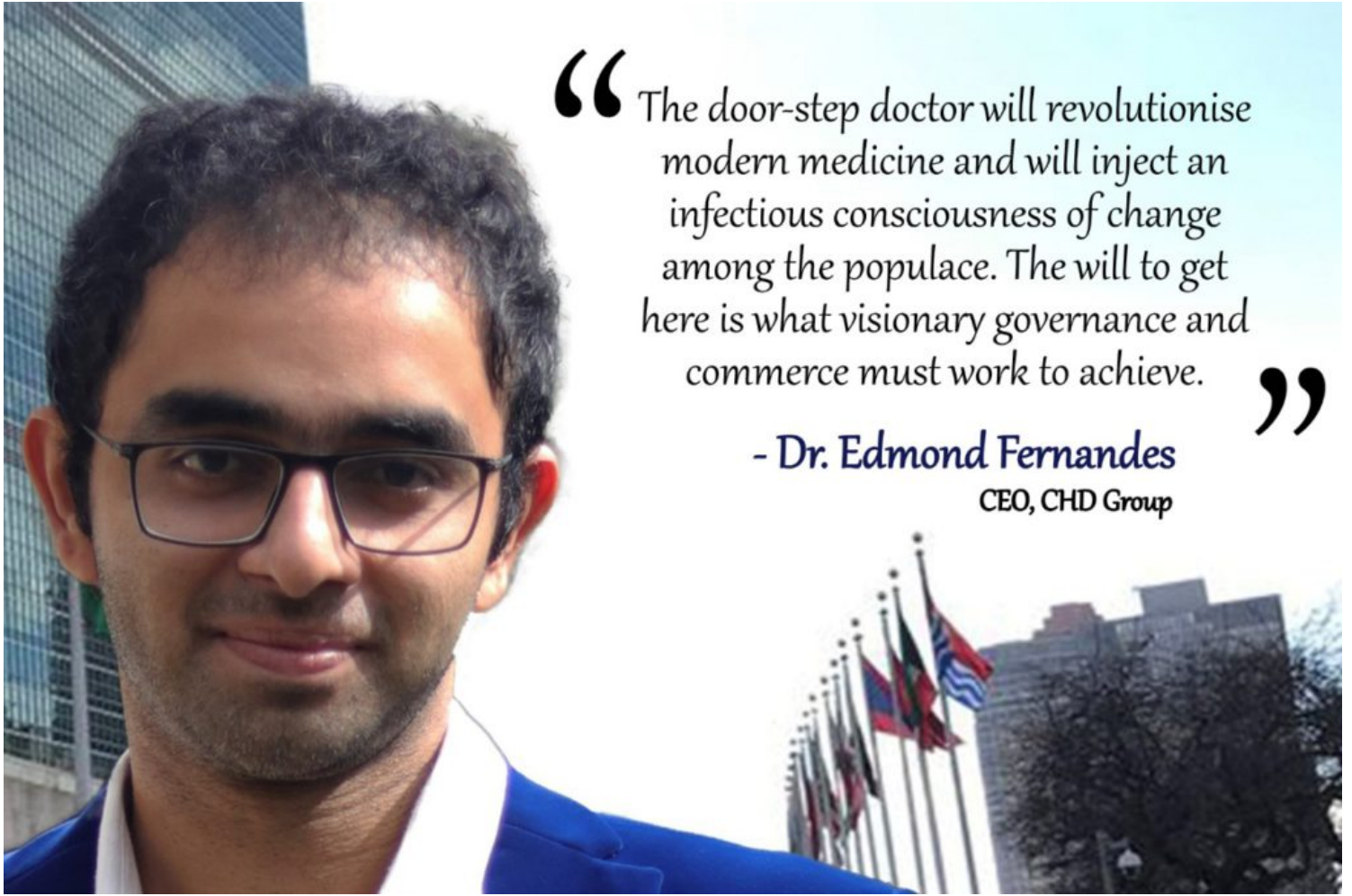
The ambition to Eliminate Tuberculosis, [End Malaria](#), bring out a vaccine for Dengue, defeat poverty and bring affordable healthcare is very much possible in our lifetime, but we must seriously engage and keep inflated ego's aside.

I have observed that when bunch of energetic young individuals approach elders/professors/deans', there is an element of growing pessimism and they are shunned away with negative comments. This mindset and attitude needs to change. We need to graduate from a laid-back community to the most vibrant breed across the nation and around the world. This essentially means, we need to act. Set up preventive health clinics, engage in field work beyond cosmetic commitments, fight with red-tapism till victory is yours and bring in real-world transformation to the task there is to do.

### ***Images for representation***







“ The door-step doctor will revolutionise modern medicine and will inject an infectious consciousness of change among the populace. The will to get here is what visionary governance and commerce must work to achieve. ”

**- Dr. Edmond Fernandes**  
CEO, CHD Group











Around 850-900 MD Community Medicine doctors pass out every year. With this workforce, it technically means we should eliminate most of the diseases in our lifetime, take over District Health Offices, occupy all positions at Health Ministries along with public health professionals and also set up Preventive Medicine Departments at all hospitals, corporate included. What stops us then? Mustn't we act.

A new branch called Family Medicine which has grown in the recent many years is making more demands at all levels of government than community medicine has ever done in Independent India.

Young and mid-level community medicine professionals will ought to assume greater activism, be more passionate other than manufacturing research papers which no one reads and will have to bring change by getting to the ground. If you are caught in a system that frustrates you, rather than letting you bloom, it is time you quit and pursue your life's goal to nurture a healthy world, for the very reason you took up the discipline and for the very reason, you are called a doctor.

I get pained when MD level physicians sit with their laptops and do statistical tests using software. Isn't that the prerogative of biostatisticians qualified in the field to do?

Give it a thought, when you can treat patients, when you can implement programmes, when you can go to the field and see miracles because you exist, when you have the power to add a smile to another life, and when you can heal them, why would you not want to do any of these things in your lifetime?

The power to heal the world lies before us, let us make it all it can be.

## **About the Author:**



## **Dr. Edmond Fernandes**

[Dr. Edmond Fernandes](#) is the CEO, CHD Group, India Country Office & Senior Fellow - Atlantic Council, Washington DC. Views expressed in personal capacity.