

INVITATION for MFC ANNUAL MEET, JAN 1999

Dear friends,

Greetings from Vellore!

MFC is 25 years old this year. In the mid annual meeting of July, it was decided to use this opportunity to look back into history and forward into time. The theme for the annual meet in January 28-30 is "25 YEARS OF MFC". The meeting will be at Yatri Niwas, Sewagram, Wardha. For each of us this process may have different meanings. Some may reminisce on the past; others may focus on self-evaluation and planning for the future; still some may use it as an opportunity to motivate others and to publicise our organisation. Some points for discussion that emerged at the mid-annual meet are:

- * What is MFC? Is it a group of friends or a movement or is it a thought current?
- * What does MFC mean to us individually? How has it helped us in our individual lives and work?
- * What have been the important focuses of MFC thinking? How have these ideas evolved over time?
- * Which are the action strategies that have been taken up by MFC and what did they result in?
- * What has been the influence of MFC on the health movement and health care in general? How can one begin to ask this question?
- * What are the aspects of our organisational strengths that have helped us to survive and what have been its failings?
- * What are the roles and responsibilities of our group at this historical juncture? What are our priorities and how do we propose to work towards these?

Preparatory work that was suggested is as follows:

1. Individuals and friends are requested to send reminiscences and reflections on MFC.
2. Previous Convenor's and editors are requested to write reflections on their periods in 'office' and their views on the organisation and its future.
3. Abhay Bhang has been requested to write on the early history of MFC along with the other 'founder' members.
4. Amar Jesani and Dhruv Mankad have been requested to write about the organisational structure of MFC.
5. The Vellore and Bangalore groups would attempt to compile the themes of the annual meets and to review action strategies that MFC has undertaken.
6. CEHAT will coordinate a compilation of the index of the MFC bulletins.
7. A suggestion was that we invite groups we are involved with and those we would like to work with to the annual meet.
8. Individual members have been requested to write articles for the lay and the health press on the history of our organisation.

The Southern groups will meet on September 20 at CHC, Bangalore, for more detailed preparation.

Please send in your suggestions and write ups to the editor so that they can be published in the bulletin before the meet.

Prabir, Madhukar and Anand Convenor's, MFC. The Medico Friend Circle (MFC) is an all India group of socially conscious individuals from diverse backgrounds, who come together because of a common concern about the health problems in the country. MFC is trying to critically analyse the existing health care system which is highly medicalized and to evolve an appropriate approach towards developing a system of health care which is humane and which can meet the needs of the vast majority of the population in our country. About half of the MFC members are doctors, mostly allopathic, and the rest from other fields. Loosely knit and informal as a national organization, the group has been meeting annually for more than twenty years.

Prabir Chatterjee, Madhukar Pai, Anand Zakaria

Convenors