

# HINDU TEMPLE BRINGS DOCTORS TO THOSE IN NEED

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## CHESAPEAKE

Ramesh Patel's granddaughter and her family have just arrived from England, and they haven't signed up for health insurance yet.

So the Newport News man carried 2-year-old Mishwa around the free Health Camp at the Hindu Temple of Hampton Roads on Saturday to get her a checkup.

He has insurance but said he was also going to take advantage of the tables where volunteer doctors and nurses waited to give advice.

"It is nice to be in one place, at one time, and easily access the different specialists," he said.

The Health Camp pulled in more than 50 nurses and doctors. A bus for vision and hearing screenings sat in the parking lot, and pharmacists stood by to answer questions about medications.

The camp was conceived by the Jeevan Sandhya Mandal, a group for senior citizens at the temple. Group founders said they realized that many of their members speak little or no English, don't drive and might not have health insurance. They contacted local members of AAPI – the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin – and discussed holding a community fair.

The doctors bought into the idea easily. AAPI held a much smaller health day a few years ago but had fewer than 100 people show. Organizers were expecting about 250 on Saturday.

“With this many physicians under one roof, we thought, let’s try it and see what kind of success we can have,” said Parthiv Sheth, local AAPI president.

As part of the event, organizers worked with LabCorp, a health care diagnostic company, to provide a discounted rate to allow people to get blood work done earlier in the week. Close to 200 people took advantage of that program, and results were available Saturday .

Shortly after the clinic opened at noon, the lobby was filled, and lines were forming .