

ARDSI CALCUTTA CHAPTER

Providing Dementia Care & Service since 1999

An Appeal

ARDSI Calcutta Chapter is dedicated to provide care and support for people with progressive memory loss or dementia within the territory of West-Bengal.

Keeping to its objective, ARDSI Calcutta has now planned to extend its services such as dementia care, memory clinic, awareness program among people of the suburban area and rural area.

In accordance to the above plan, a visionary and charitable person from Chandernogore has agreed to donate a piece of land close to Delhi Road to start dementia care centre with the future plan to build an aging research centre along with it.

In India, aging population is increasing very fast and hence the burden of dementia is expected to increase. It has been estimated that dementia will be in epidemic proportion in coming days. To combat this increasing burden, it is necessary that adequate preparation is planned. As a first step of preparation, the diagnosis of dementia cases is essential. Global studies have shown that early detection also diminishes the total expenses incurred by families by several billions.

As an initial plan, it has been decided to open a clinic to screen aged persons of above and equal to 60 years in the Chandernogore

municipality through a home to home visit by a small team of neuropsychologist and a field worker. Temporarily the clinic will be close to proposed Dementia care centre which will be in proposed name of the donor and administrative control of ARDSI- Calcutta Chapter. The clinic will be visited by senior doctors in the sphere of neurology and psychiatry weekly.

The field team will provide home visit in the above territory with a questionnaire to screen early cases with dementia as well as raising awareness. These cases will be referred periodically to our clinic for confirmation of diagnosis. However certain blood tests and brain imaging picture (such as CT scan or MRI) may be needed from outside. The positive subjects will receive a prescription of medicines and basic counseling if needed.

One should be aware that the frequency of dementia subjects in our country is still lower than Western countries. This may be due to either proportionally younger population of ours or presence of protective factors in our environment, such as curry paste from Tamarind (Haldi) which has shown beneficial effect in experimental animals.

Alzheimer's disease, the commonest type of dementia has no cure till date. Hence, it should be prevented. As first step of prevention, one should identify what are the risk factors or protective factors which should protect us from

the disorder. However, scant research has been done from India about these potential factors. So, we plan to undertake research on those factors in future.

Now the question is why all aged persons do not develop dementia. Few persons may develop mild memory impairment or slow cerebration, but these do not impair day to day function, or social interaction. The true reason may be unknown, but underlying cause may be genetic. Studies have shown that if there is dementia in one member of the family (parents or brother or sister), other members may be affected at an early age. This is due to genetic inheritance. Genetic researchers throughout the world are trying to find out any gene/genes which make a person susceptible to develop Alzheimer disease based on gene-interaction with environmental factors. We plan to carry out genetic studies in this research centre in future.

Presently we have planned to see the subjects with memory loss, but in future we plan to extend our service to patients with stroke and Parkinson disease, since these disorders may also produce dementia.

In this communication, I appeal to you that our plan to build a dementia care centre cum research centre needs a lot of financial support. I shall request all of you to support this venture by donating money to ARDSI- Calcutta Chapter. In donating money, you will get income tax deduction. Your small contribution will add to a substantial amount which will help us to fulfill our dream.

- Dr. Shyamal Kumar Das, President

Special Programmes

Department of International Development, Kolkata office in association with Calcutta Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology, Kolkata conducted a 6 months Geriatric Care Course, that armed the participants with knowledge of all the issues that our elderly population experience. ARDSI Calcutta, represented by Ms. Nilanjana Maulik was invited to address the participants in Dementia care. This initiative has created a huge opportunity for families in need of trained geriatric personnel.



The Department of Rehabilitation Nursing, National Institute for the Orthopedically Handicapped, Kolkata organized a workshop on Comprehensive Management of Geriatric Client, where Ms. Nilanjana Maulik was invited to address the nursing students from all nursing institutes in Kolkata on management of people with dementia.

Byloom, a handloom & handicrafts boutique in Kolkata showed that caring for people with dementia is a joint effort of all those who can still reason & remember. We appreciate this fundraising initiative of Byloom



to make a difference in the lives of people with dementia and their families in Kolkata.

- **Report by Nibedita Datta Ray,**
Programme Coordinator

Daycare Centre



Celebrating Dol utsab at Daycare

Public awareness and understanding of dementia needs to be improved and the stigma associated with it addressed. This objective should inform people of the benefits of timely diagnosis and care, promote the prevention of dementia and reduce social exclusion and discrimination. Media houses have a huge role in our society to fulfill this objective.

Recently, our daycare center activities was captured and shared with people at large through the News Time channel.



Carer Meet at ARDSI Daycare Centre

ARDSI Calcutta participated in the Cognitive Rehabilitation Workshop for Brain Injured patients organized by “Centre for Potential Excellence in Particular Area” University of Calcutta, Department of Psychology and Cognitive Neurology Unit, Apollo Gleneagles Hospitals, Kolkata. We also displayed our publications, newsletters, leaflets, brochures for the delegates. Two of the speakers from the workshop visited our daycare center to get a glimpse of our activities.

One was Prof. Barbara Wilson, a clinical neuropsychologist who has worked in brain injury rehabilitation for 35 years and won many awards for her work including an OBE for services to rehabilitation in 1998 and two lifetime achievement awards, one from the British Psychological Society and one from the International Neuro-psychological Society and another was Prof. Jonathan Evans, presently the Course Director for the MSc in Clinical Neuropsychology at the university of Glasgow.

Professor Jonathan Evans research interests include the cognitive neuropsychology of memory, the assessment and rehabilitation of disorders of attention and executive functioning, the application of new technology in cognitive rehabilitation and the treatment of mood disorder in the context of brain injury.

Here is a note from Prof. Jonathan Evans after his visit to our center.



“Thank you so much for inviting me to visit your centre. I really enjoyed my visit. For me the most important thing about any centre is the 'milleu', or the atmosphere of the place and I felt you have a great atmosphere. It is a place where people with dementia are respected, understood and supported and this is immediately obvious. Creating a sense of a club is a positive approach that I feel also encourages a sense of respect. Your emphasis on supporting families is also such an important feature of your work that I think must mean that the benefits of people coming to the centre also extends to their home environment. With best wishes, Jon.”

- **Report by Papiya Bose,
Daycare Coordinator**

Some excerpts from Stuart Flynn, CEO, Southern Cross Care after his visit to ARDSI Calcutta, February 2013

ARDSI Calcutta has made huge progress since the relationship with SCC began in 2005. SCC and ARDSI Calcutta became partners basically because they shared a commitment to service provision. The relationship has continued because that initial commitment remains paramount. SCC has been impressed by the philosophy, culture and modus operandi of ARDSI, Calcutta - in many ways the culture of the two organisations is very similar and hence, the sustainability of the relationship.

My current visit was aimed at reassuring the SCC Board that the relationship remains valid and sustainable.

Many of the suggestions made by SCC to ARDSI Calcutta over the years have been accepted and implemented. I think it is quite appropriate for SCC to continue to support these areas, be that through staff visits, training or the transfer of intellectual property.

ARDSI Calcutta is now less of a one-person operation than previously seen during my last visit. There are now dedicated administrative staff in post who have been able to pick up many routine managerial tasks and thereby facilitate greater attention on service delivery to the people with dementia and their families.

“Connecting Communities”: A dementia friendly initiative - Nilanjana Maulik, Director- Dementia Services

After my graduation, I decided to understand the real world that would make me feel grounded, original and approachable in my

work. I happen to achieve my dream when I offered myself to volunteer in a daycare facility for people with dementia. However, none of my education addressed how to work with people with dementia. Though, I did discover that I loved being with them and that more often we were able to have a positive effect on each other.

Dementia alters a person's capacity to continue interaction, which poses great challenges for those of us who are not sure how to connect when the set of rules change. Basically, we fail when we face unfamiliar or unconventional ways of interactions. What are we supposed to do when a person with dementia enters the drawing room naked? What do we say to an 86 year old woman who still thinks she is in school and needs to finish her homework before her mother returned from work? Whatever the disease process, the person with dementia becomes unable to bond in usual ways. This means that if a connection is going to occur, it will be up to us.

As a professional caregiver, I am out in our community on a regular basis. I gather up people's worries and concerns and think about what can be done to assist them. I can see that people with dementia and their caregivers face wider challenges we all take for granted – getting to the local shops, spending time with friends and family, getting money from the bank, going on a holiday – are made difficult by the lack of understanding of dementia in our communities.

A significant thought in caring for people with dementia is that, each person with dementia continues living in a way that suits them the best. This means, an endeavor not just

by an individual but by each and every civilian who will work together to form a care chain with the government sectors, corporate bodies and health sector to build communities that will support people with dementia. The Calcutta chapter of ARDSI would appeal to all to come forward and help build a Dementia Friendly community.

An appeal from a family caregiver - N K Basu

A Lewy Body Dementia patient had an acute gastroenteritis diarrhoea with dehydration and Electrolytic imbalance. The local GP advised for immediate hospitalization and was admitted in the Emergency Ward of Peerless Hospital where from the patient was immediately transferred to ITU.

While the patient was treated in the hospital, it was sadly noticed that the nursing staff and others of the service providers lack the elementaries of the problems of patients with dementia and/or Alzheimer's disease. Consequently, the patient suffered trauma every now and then and although she had somehow recovered from the infection, her composition was greatly deteriorated as regards, orientation, cognitive abilities, movement etc. due to the illness as also the trauma she had to face.

Submission: ARDSI may consider submitting a suitable memorandum to the state and central health ministry highlighting the problems of geriatric patients in general and of the Alzheimer's disease patients in particular and to provide a special cell for such patients and to arrange sensitizing / awareness drive among the nursing staff of hospitals and nursing homes.