

**Report- International Conference on Advances in Dementia & XXI National
conference of ARDSI
22nd, 23rd & 24th September, 2017
Venue: The Gateway Hotel, Kolkata
Organized by ARDSI Calcutta Chapter**



An International conference was recently held in Kolkata on Advances in Dementia as part of observing the World Alzheimer's Month, an international campaign every September to raise awareness and challenge the stigma that surrounds dementia. World Alzheimer's Month was launched in 2012. World Alzheimer's Day is on 21 September each year.

The conference was organised by Calcutta Chapter of Alzheimer's and Related Disorders Society of India [ARDSI]. ARDSI was founded in 1992 and its West Bengal division was established in 1999. This was the third conference in Kolkata, earlier ones were held in 2003 and 2009.

Dementia affects all aspects of brain function. WHO recognised that "Dementia has physical, psychological, social, and economical impact on carers, families and society." Between 5 and 8 persons out of 100 people over the age of 60 suffers from dementia. Now we know that worldwide there are 47 million cases and 10 million new case being reported every year [WHO statistics].

2 out of every 3 people globally believe there is little or no understanding of dementia in their countries. The impact of World Alzheimer's Month is growing, but the stigmatisation and misinformation that surrounds dementia remains a global problem, that requires global action. India has 4.1 million with dementia and Kolkata report 46,000 in a study done sometime back.

September 2017 was the 6th global World Alzheimer's Month, and utilised the theme of 'Remember me' to highlight the importance of early detection and diagnosis of dementia to provide enriched quality of life to people and their care partners living with it. This International Conference on "Advances in Dementia"

organized by Alzheimer's & Related Disorders Society of India, Calcutta chapter was an endeavor in that regard.

With this conference we had an opportunity to engage all communities around the world and truly make Dementia a global health and social priority.

The conference started on 22nd of September with a rural perspective on Dementia in a rural setting, Chandernagore and was followed in Kolkata on 23rd & 24th by discussion on international & local perspectives. One explicit purpose of this conference in Kolkata was also to highlight the need for dementia assessment and care centres in rural areas of Bengal too.

This was a great academic event where neurologists, psychiatrists, neuropsychologists, geriatricians, other physicians, Persons with dementia & their care partners along with friends & family took part. In parallel with the scientific session there were parallel caring sessions for volunteers, care partners, music therapists.

The major highlight of the conference was a National Dementia Strategy Meeting organized by ARDSI Calcutta to put Dementia on the Central & State Government's agenda and making it a national priority of health.

