



The greatest service we can extend to the older people of our country is to enable them to 'age in place', in their own homes and communities rather than relocating or moving them into an institutional setting.



## “Changing the picture around the lives of vulnerable older people”

We are witnessing long lifespans like never before, with both opportunities and challenges by living in a community with so many aging family members. Living longer comes across as both a blessing and a challenge, particularly when one faces poverty, housing insecurity, disability, or isolation. Each and every family member who lives with older persons looks for support system, resources and help to ensure quality life for them.

And indeed, this is possible! Through Vriddha Mitra’s community based projects!

These community based projects are being implemented in four different locations, in Pune (both urban and rural), Mumbai (urban), Bhopal (urban) and Gwalior (rural). The direct reach is making a difference to the lives of 11000 elderlies. We have people, programs and services available for vulnerable elderlies.

Our teams are passionate, hard-working, creative, and inspired caregivers, service providers, and researchers. The people who care for, research, and serve elderlies have also pioneered innovations, not only in terms of services and programming, but in terms of changing the picture around the lives of vulnerable older people.

This new picture emphasizes no elderly should be left behind. They should be encouraged and empowered to seek support; and the families should be counselled and supported to cope emotionally and financially. A new pathway where professionals can be sensitized to provide all services with much patience and sincerity is being carved out. And a vibrant community life that can help sustain the spirit of engaging with and caring for older people is absolutely doable.

*Benazir*

Dr. Benazir Patil, CEO, SCHOOL



**वृद्ध मित्र**

**"Vriddha Mitra,  
We Truly Are Friends Of Older People"**



# Last Mile Connectivity

## ***Bhagwan Bhaguji Ulaande, aged 67 years, lives in Tadiwala Road, Pune***

Bhagwan Bhaguji Ulaande Grandpa lives with his elderly wife and an unmarried daughter, both working as maids. Both his sons live nearby with their families but do not provide any kind of support. Grandpa being a chronic alcoholic, subsequently developed health issues like age related body aches, joint pains and diabetes.

The carelessness regarding food habits and health care aggravated his situation further. He underwent emotional turmoil during pandemic lockdown as he had to get his right leg amputated below the knee. He had hurt his right feet which did not heal owing to diabetes and he developed severe gangrene. The incident changed his life as it impacted his daily activities and he needed assistance even for toilet. Grandpa was enrolled in the "Vridhha Mitra" program for elderlies, Saving Life Checklist was filled and his challenges were noted by her. He was immediately put on a course of multivitamin and calcium supplements along with medicines for diabetes and pain relievers.

He along with his family was counselled regarding giving up alcohol permanently and making necessary changes in his food habits and life style. Despite the efforts, the immobility was a serious issue hampering his quality of life. CO Jyoti Tai realised that Grandpa needed support in getting an artificial leg which would solve his mobility concerns largely. After through discussion with her seniors and other team members, Grandpa was taken to the camp organised by SCHOOL on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at Bawdhan area in Pune where free distribution of artificial foot and clippers was being done. His measurements were taken for his artificial foot and on 10<sup>th</sup> August he received his new artificial foot with immense relief and joy. Grandpa was also provided with a walker to get accustomed with the artificial foot in walking. He is overwhelmed that he could be on his two feet again and is extremely grateful Vridhha Mitra for constant support. He thanked God for offering him a second chance in life.



## ***Ramsevak Pukhkhuram Jatav, aged 63 years, lives in Gohinda village, Gwalior.***

Grandpa Ramsevak Pukhkhuram Jatav has been living with his wife and middle-aged daughter who will be married soon. Grandpa along with several health issues, has been partially paralysed since past ten years owing to which he faces difficulty in walking and speaking. He owns a small piece of agricultural land in which he harvests few crops for their personal needs. He through Below Poverty (BPL) card gets free grains, sugar etc. supported by the local government. However, he was not getting senior citizen pension and had no source of cash income as the age on his Aadhaar card was written only 52 years. CO Kuldeep after enrolling Grandpa in the Vridhha Mitra program for the elderlies decided to support him in this matter by collecting other available online government documents like Voter ID card, Pariwar (Samagarh) card with the help of his team. Post document collection, Grandpa was taken to the nearest Aadhaar service center at Bhitwar, 4-5 km away from his village Gohinda, wherein his biometrics and supporting documents were verified and process of correcting age was completed. After receiving the corrected Aadhaar card, an application for senior citizen pension was prepared by Vridhha Mitra team and submitted at the local Janpad Panchayat Office in Bhitwar. Within few weeks, Grandpa received documents stating that his application had been accepted and he would start receiving senior citizen pension soon upon opening a bank account in the nearest nation bank. To his immense joy Grandpa received his first pension of Rs.600/- just before Diwali which he withdrew from his bank account which certainly brought some light in his celebrations.

# Important Updates of the Quarter

## Last Mile Connectivity in Pune

- Total 17541 home visits including follow up visits were made during the last quarter. Community Officers provided support to elderlies through: counselling on improving life style; mental well-being; psychological support; nutrition; medication; social security entitlements and schemes; and all referral services. Interactions were held with the family members to discuss about elderlies' health issues and the care required.
- 633 different assistive devices such as walking sticks, walkers, diapers, commode chairs, asthma pumps, spectacles, cervical belts, abdominal belts, knee caps, and many others were provided to improve the quality of life for the elderlies.
- Total 6002 elderlies were provided with medicines and nutritional supplements.
- Total 1167 elderlies were provided consultation and medication through the virtual OPDs held near their homes.
- Total 2054 elderlies were escorted for physiotherapy and other services like visits to higher hospitals for surgeries and treatment for cancer.
- Total 1352 elderlies referred for different services like bone screening, proctologist, eye check-up, mental health counselling, cancer care treatment, hypertension, diabetes, asthma treatment and vaccination.
- Total 1737 elderlies received physiotherapy treatment in the community and geriatric unit. (Community - 988, Geriatric Unit -741)
- Total 93 elderlies required linkages to disability shelter and employment out of those 54 elderlies linked to different departments and 8 elderlies received benefit of the disability and employment schemes.
- Total 500 entitlements documents were issued out of those 294 elderlies received income certificate and 3 elderlies started receiving monthly pension.
- Total 147 Proposals submitted for Shehri Garib Yojana card. All 147 elderlies received SGY card. Vriddha Mitra sponsored for 109 SGY cards. Out of these 39 elderlies availed free medicines and 9 elderlies received benefits in terms of concession in hospitalization to the tune of Rs. 7,57,000/-.
- Total 12,703 elderlies got vaccinated with Covishield and Covaxin for Covid-19

## Last Mile Connectivity in Mumbai, Bhopal and Gwalior

- Total 9799 home visits including follow-up visits (Mumbai-2050, Gwalior-5024, Bhopal-2725) were conducted during the last quarter to provide support to elderlies.
- Total 171 assistive devices (Mumbai-74, Gwalior-52, Bhopal-45) were provided to the elderlies
- Total 810 elderlies (Mumbai-54, Gwalior-517, Bhopal-239) were provided consultation through Virtual OPDs.
- Medicines, multi-vitamins and different supplements were extended to 2449 elderlies (Mumbai-313, Gwalior-1425, Bhopal-711).
- Raw ration was distributed to 69 elderlies (Mumbai-34, Bhopal-35)
- Total 1205 elderlies (Gwalior-518, Bhopal-519, Mumbai-168) were provided home health check-ups.
- 526 elderlies received physiotherapy in the community in Bhopal.
- 46 elderlies (Gwalior-32, Bhopal-14) were assisted in getting their Ayushman (health insurance) Card
- Audiometry test was done for 25 elderlies (Gwalior-23, Bhopal-2)
- 128 eye check-ups done out. (Gwalior-41, Mumbai-49, Bhopal-38)
- Total 48 elderlies' proposal submitted for various pension schemes (Gwalior-20, Mumbai-6, Bhopal-22)
- 282 elderlies were referred for different services to Government, private and other organisations. (Gwalior - 99, Mumbai-18, Bhopal-165).
- 11862 elderlies were vaccinated for Covid-19 (Bhopal- 7362, Gwalior 4500)

# Key Highlights

**Community Action for Elderly in Gwalior:** In Bhitwar block of Gwalior district a new initiative to establish “Vriddha Mitra Gram Samiti” at village level has been started. The Vriddha Mitra Gram Samiti is a village level (population of 1000 or more) group of stakeholders of all ages, genders, castes, from various sectors who work together to achieve a common goal, to help older people lead safe, healthy lives and participate fully in society. The Vriddha Mitra Gram Samiti comprises 11 members from the respective village. The members include: Sarpanch/Mukhiya, elderlies, representative of Yuva Mandal, Mahila Mandal, ASHA, Anganwadi, etc. In the said quarter Vriddha Mitra Gram Samitis have been established in four villages.

**Consultation on Healthy Cities Network in Pune City:** On 21<sup>st</sup> Sept, 2022 a city level consultation was organised in Pune city. The consultation focused on making Pune a healthy city through the lens of healthy ageing. Total 31 representatives from Pune Municipal corporation, academic institutes, and civil society organizations participated in the consultation. Issues like, initiation of recreational activities for elderlies in community centres, awareness programs on various illnesses of elderlies in community centres, facilitating and easy documentation process for linkages of social security entitlements and schemes for elderlies, initiation of “elderly care leave” for the staff of the organizations were discussed and a decision to participate in ‘Healthy Cities Network’ was endorsed by all.

**Advocacy for expediting documentation for social security benefits:** A meeting was organised with the District Legal Services and Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Pension Yojana department at Pune as an advocacy initiative. The objective of this meeting was to find solution on challenges to get the documentations for pension schemes. Accordingly, one of the solutions that emerged was to organise camps at cluster level for screening the documents of elderlies and issuing income certificates. Also, a letter in this regard was issued to the concerned departments to organise camps and acceptance of pension proposals under single window system. Subsequently three such camps were organized in this quarter for Talijai, Tadiwala Road, and Janta Vasahat clusters of Pune as an immediate outcome of the meeting.

## New Ventures, Collaborations, Partnerships

- MoU with Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital (Trust) in Bhopal city: to jointly implement eye care activities
- MoU with Mansarovar Global University for Physiotherapy services.
- MoU with Brijlal Jindal Physiotherapy College in Pune for physiotherapy services at Dalvi, Sonawane Geriatric Units and the Communities in all clusters of Pune city.
- MOU with the Bhopal School of Social Sciences (BSSS) for various joint activities.
- **Art of Helping Foundation:** provides with cooked food twice a day to the vulnerable elderlies in Pune.
- **Mudita Foundation:** provides with raw ration and cooked food.
- **Healing Hands Foundation:** organizes two proctology camps in every month for the elderly in the field areas of Pune. Treatment and medication support is also provided by the foundation.
- **Jeevandai Foundation:** organizes regular health checkup camps in the field areas of Pune and provides with treatment for diabetes, hypertension and asthma along with free medication.
- **Suryadatta Foundation:** provides with artificial limbs to the needy elderlies. 3 elderlies from Pune slums got artificial leg along with all free services.
- **Bharti Hospital** provides support for eye check-ups and cataract surgeries.
- **‘Sita Ram Rasoi’ in Bhopal:** provides cooked food to the elderlies in the project area
- **Chief Medical and Health Officer (CMHO), Bhopal issued a letter for supporting Vriddha Mitra Program** with a view to accelerate health services and camps for elderlies

# Special Services

Special services to the elderly population were extended in collaboration with various government, private and not-for-profit organizations in all four locations.

- **Ophthalmic Camps:** - 194 elderlies received eye check-up services in 5 camps organized in coordination with H.V Desai and Bharti Hospital. Out of those, 72 were diagnosed with cataract and their surgeries were supported in Pune. A camp was organized at Bhopal in coordination with Seva Sadan Hospital. 22 elderlies received eye check-up services and 11 elderlies were diagnosed with cataract and their surgeries were also supported.
- **Orthopedic Camp:** - 124 elderlies were screened in 5 camps organized in 5 clusters in coordination with Medicare Foundation.
- **Mental health awareness camps:** 216 elderlies were sensitized and 47 were referred to family counselling centers of three organizations, Swadhar, Parivartan and M-Power.
- **Umbrella and Tarpaulin:** - Total 88 elderlies were extended umbrellas and tarpaulin from rotary club in two clusters to combat the rains.
- **ENT Special Camp:** in coordination with J.K. Hospital in Bhopal. Total 13 elderlies received services from this camp.
- **Cancer and TB:** Two camps for screening of oral cancer were organized in collaboration with KEM hospital in Mumbai. Total 80 elderlies were screened in the camp. Two individual donors in Mumbai helped elderlies with treatment for cancer and TB.

*We recognize and acknowledge continuous support of various organizations in Pune, Mumbai, Bhopal, Gwalior and Delhi who are part of our 'Vridha Mitra' network, extending free services and care to our elderlies.*

