DIALOGUE

Newsletter of Dementia India Alliance | July 2025



www.dementia-india.org

National Dementia Support Line

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Dementia India Alliance (DIA) was founded with a singular purpose — to bring help and hope to persons living with dementia and their family caregivers. As we reflect on the past six months, we are heartened by the steady and meaningful progress we have made in pursuit of this purpose.

This has been a highly productive period for DIA. Our work has expanded across multiple fronts — from memory screening and raising awareness, to promoting timely diagnosis, risk reduction education, training programs, and advocacy. Each of these pillars is critical in shaping a dementia-friendly India, and we are proud to be steadily advancing on all of them.

One of the most significant developments has been the growing network of Outreach Partners. These are institutions and organisations who have taken ownership of dementia care in their regions and have been instrumental in amplifying our impact at the grassroots. Their work is helping translate awareness into action where it matters most.

We are also building a committed team of professionals who bring expertise and compassion to the cause and will help shape the next phase of DIA's journey. We are deeply grateful for the support of Tata Trusts, which has enabled us to expand our initiatives across five South Indian states — a milestone in our efforts to reach those in need.

All of this would not have been possible without the support of our governing body members, advisors, donors, beneficiaries, collaborators, volunteers, interns, and outreach partners. Each one of you has played an important role in strengthening the movement for better dementia care in India.

Thank you for standing with us. Together, we look forward to doing more — reaching further, and ensuring that every person with dementia and every caregiver finds the support they deserve.



Dr Radha S Murthy
President

S Premkumar Raja Secretary



Remember to Live Healthy, So that you can Remember









Dementia is not a normal part of ageing. At every age, increased forgetfulness is a sign that something's wrong. Let's run a quick check:

- Were you paying attention?
- Are you seeing and hearing clearly enough to engage with others?
- · Have you reduced your social interactions with others?
- Do you feel low, tired, uninterested in activities you used to enjoy?

These aren't just passing moods—they're signs. And we're already in the middle of an important conversation: dementia risk reduction.

The Lancet Commission gave us a clear list: 14 modifiable risk factors for dementia. At first glance, they sound like basic health advice-don't smoke, eat less junk, move more, correct your hearing, wear a helmet, socialize. But here's the key insight: These behavioural (tobacco, alcohol, inadequate physical activity), metabolic (hypertension, obesity, diabetes and cholesterol) and environmental (air pollution)

risk factors are similar to those for India's most widespread non-communicable diseases (NCDs)—like heart disease, cancer, stroke.

So why isn't dementia already part of India's official NCD policy? India has the highest number of people with diabetes in the world. Along with hypertension, obesity, air pollution-conditions deeply linked to dementia. And yet, dementia still remains outside the official NCD agenda. If dementia were treated like other NCDs, routine mental status examinations, memory screenings, and depression assessments could be seamlessly integrated into general health check-ups. Such an approach would not only support early detection and timely intervention, but also help normalize brain health—reducing stigma and re-framing dementia as a public health issue, not just an individual concern. We could prevent or delay thousands of dementia cases, especially among India's rapidly growing senior population. Most importantly, we would be sending a clear message: brain health is everyday health. Currently, dementia like every other NCD is treated as an individual responsibility.

Your lifestyle choices will ascertain your health. But that also implies the presence of a 'choice'—and that's something many of us miss. It's easy to put off our health. We delay the walk. We cancel the check-up. We say, "I'll sleep more next week." But dementia affects more than memory, it also affects our sense of self. If memories make us who we are, then don't we owe it to ourselves to protect them. Living well isn't just about warding off disease. It's about staying connected, joyful, and active.

You're choosing not just to live longer-but to live better.

So reducing risk for dementia is remembering to live well—starting now.

Key Highlights: Voices for Change



Meeting with Union Health Minister, Shri JP Nadda

Our leadership met Shri JP Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, to present a White Paper on Minimum Standards for Dementia Care Facilities. The white paper outlines key recommendations aimed at establishing uniform, person-centered care standards across institutional settings. It emphasizes the urgent need for structured care pathways, staff training, safety protocols, infrastructure guidelines, and dignity-driven service delivery for persons living with dementia in line with Mental Health Care Act 2017. As part of the submission, our leadership also formally requested the formation of an Inter-Ministerial Task Force to spearhead a national response to dementia—one that cuts across health, social justice, education, and rural development sectors.

Meeting with Health Minister, Andhra Pradesh

With dementia prevalence in Andhra Pradesh at 7.7%—significantly higher than the national average—and nearly 8 lakh projected cases by 2036, the need for a targeted response has never been more urgent. In light of this, we met with Hon'ble Health Minister Shri Satya Kumar Yadav to advocate for the development of a State Dementia Action Plan and explore avenues for collaboration on the upcoming DEMCON national conference. The Health Minister responded with keen interest and openness to collaboration. We remain hopeful and committed to working with the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Andhra Pradesh, toward building a comprehensive and impactful dementia care roadmap.





Meeting with Puducherry Health Secretary:

DIA had a meaningful meeting with Shri Jayanta Kumar Ray IAS, Health Secretary of Puducherry to discuss strengthening dementia care in the Union Territory. We deeply appreciate the Secretary's time, thoughtful engagement, and openness to our suggestions.

DIA expressed its commitment to supporting the development of a comprehensive Dementia Action Plan for Puducherry. With the Secretary taking over as Chairman of PONCARE, we see a strong opportunity to integrate dementia screening, awareness, risk reduction, and training into PONCARE's existing health and wellness programs for older adults.

We hope this conversation marks the beginning of a collaborative journey, with the goal of launching a focused dementia care initiative aligned with World Alzheimer's Month in September.

Key Highlights: Opening Conversations about Brain Health



Bengaluru | 26th April 2025

Dementia India Alliance (DIA), in collaboration with Ivory and the Centre for

Brain Research (CBR), Nightingales Medical Trust (NMT), NIMHANS, and Vayah Vikas, hosted a dynamic and impactful workshop in Bengaluru.

> caregivers, healthcare professionals, students, and senior citizens - the workshop shone a light on the urgent and evolving realities of dementia care in India.

Mumbai | 07th June 2025

On June 7th, Dementia India Alliance, in collaboration with Ivory and Synergy, India, hosted an insightful and interactive workshop at Smt Maniben MP Shah Women's College, Matunga, Mumbai. With 45 enthusiastic participants — including healthcare professionals, caregivers, students, and senior citizens — the session focused on brain health, dementia awareness, and practical caregiving strategies, all led by expert clinicians.



Key Highlights: Early Detection in Focus

Log on for free and confidential memory screening www.demclinic.com



Early memory screening plays a crucial role in identifying cognitive concerns before they progress. Timely detection allows individuals to access medical care, adopt lifestyle changes, and receive psychosocial support—all of which can help slow the rate of decline and improve quality of life. DIA conducted over 64 memory screening camps across urban and rural communities in South India, reaching a wide cross-section of elders. 2,594 individuals screened for early signs of memory loss. 19 Old Age Homes (OAHs) reached through on-site camps. For those identified with mild symptoms or risk factors, screening is a first step toward prevention. Through brain health education, risk-reduction strategies, and referrals for follow-up care, we aim to empower individuals and families with the tools to take proactive action. We thank our collaborator Vayah Vikas for their support.

Key Highlights: Creating Awareness: The Blue Button Movement

Creating a society that understands dementia is the first step toward building empathy, reducing stigma, and encouraging timely support. During this period, Dementia India Alliance reached out to diverse audiences through targeted awareness programs: 2,247 individuals were sensitized through community sessions, health talks, and workshops. 1,252 students engaged through school and college-based sessions. Raising awareness helps communities recognise the early signs of dementia, respond with compassion, and support caregivers better. For students, these sessions are more than educational—they are a call to become changemakers. By learning about dementia early, students can help spread accurate information, support older family members, and build intergenerational empathy.



Key Highlights: Building Skills for Better Care



Building awareness is only the first step—equipping people with the right skills is what leads to meaningful, sustained change in dementia care. DIA continues to invest in training key stakeholders across healthcare and elder care settings to ensure people living with dementia receive timely, informed, and compassionate support. Training at the hospital level ensures early identification and appropriate referral for people with memory loss. At the primary health centre (PHC) and community health centre (CHC) levels, empowering frontline workers improves access in rural and underserved areas. In old age homes, trained staff can offer more person–centred care, reduce behavioural distress, and support residents with dignity. For underprivileged youth and family caregivers, training opens up both livelihood opportunities and the capacity to deliver compassionate home–based care.

- Master Trainers Developed: 75
- Healthcare Professionals Trained: 736
- PHC/CHC/MRW/VRW trained: 231
- Underprivileged Youth Trained in Dementia Care: 145
- Old Age Home Staff Trained: 324
- Community Members empowered by Master Trainers: 300

Key Highlights: Support Circles that Heal and Help

Living with dementia or caring for someone with dementia can be an isolating experience. To address this, Dementia India Alliance, in collaboration with NIMHANS and Nightingales Medical Trust, conducts regular online support groups every two weeks. **14 support group sessions were conducted and 562 participants** supported so far. These sessions offer emotional support, practical guidance, and a sense of community for caregivers and people living with dementia. Facilitated by experienced professionals, the groups help participants share experiences, learn coping strategies, and feel heard in a non-judgmental space. As we expand these efforts, we hope to have support groups in vernacular languages.

DIA in Action: The Urban Dementia Screening Study



The study screened 716 older adults (Jan-March) from upper socio-economic backgrounds, offering a glimpse into cognitive health trends within urban, affluent populations. Among the 591 elders aged 60 and above, 12.2% of individuals identified with cognitive impairment [HMSE(Hindi Mental State Examination) score ≤23].29.2% men and 25% women had at least one vascular comorbidity, while 30.6% men and 26.4% women had either hearing or vision impairment. These findings highlight the need to address vascular risk factors such as diabetes, hypertension, and sensory impairments, all of which were commonly observed among participants.

The study found that **56.9% family members failed to recognise early signs of cognitive decline,** underscoring how stigma continues to delay timely screening — even in educated communities. An additional 72 participants had scored 24-26 in HMSE, 59.7% amongst them male. These individuals are considered a vulnerable population and will be followed up with individual and family education to encourage further assessment.

Among 79 individuals aged between 50–59 years, 11.4% had cognitive impairment, of which 66.7% individuals had at least one vascular or sensory comorbidity. This early onset trend further emphasizes the need for preventive strategies and early interventions, even among younger older adults.

The study findings raised urgent questions about preparedness, access to assessment, and culturally appropriate tools for early detection in India's rapidly ageing population. In addition, the study brings to light the need for more nuanced public education and targeted outreach, especially in urban settings where denial and fear of diagnosis often deter participation. We thank Athulya for their support.



DIA in Action: Round Table on Building India's Dementia Care Workforce



We were proud to co-host a focused Round Table discussion with United Way Mumbai on one of the most pressing challenges in dementia care today: building a skilled, motivated, and respected dementia care workforce. As India's ageing population grows, so does the urgent need for trained caregivers who can provide person-centred dementia care across homes, institutions, and healthcare systems.

The conversation explored key questions with 30 experienced stakeholders in this field:

- How do we source and train the next generation of dementia caregivers?
- · What systems are needed to retain and support them in the long term?
- How can we bring dignity and recognition to the caregiving profession—especially for underprivileged youth and women who form the backbone of elder care?

The discussion highlighted both the challenges and opportunities in building a dementia care workforce that is skilled, compassionate, and valued.

DIA in Action: Placing Dementia on the Public Health Agenda



Top Left: We were honoured to participate and present on dementia care in the NIAS Leadership Workshop for the Heads and Directors of ICMR headquarters.

Top Right: We were part of the expert panel on "Public Health Aspects of Brain Ageing and Dementia", jointly conducted by NIMHANS and the Global Brain Health Institute (GBHI).

Bottom Right: We are proud to be part of an emerging dialogue that seeks to build a shared national agenda for ageing in India-bringing together voices from public health, policy, research, elder care, and civil society. Uniting for Healthy Ageing - Geriatrics, Longevity, and Dementia Care













From February to May 2025, 121 students from 10 colleges across India stepped up—not just as interns or volunteers, but as DIA Cadets: a dynamic force of empathy, grit, and purpose.

Coming from diverse academic

backgrounds - Psychology, Social Work, Nursing, and even Cloud Computing our Cadets united over one shared cause: dementia awareness and care. What began as volunteering became a heartfelt journey of connection, compassion, and community. They brought energy, empathy, and commitment - filling critical gaps and becoming the bridge between knowledge and action.

Partnering for Progress















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Age Care Foundation, Visakhapatnam

Partnering for Progress



















Free workshop on brain health today

BENGALURU, DHNS: Dementia India Alliance (DIA) is organising a free workshop on brain health in collaboration with Ivory, Nimhans, NMT Eldercare, Centre for Brain Research, and Vay and Vikas on Saturday at 9.30 am at the Centre for Brain Research, Bengaluru.

Research Bengaluru.

Research lodicates that up to 45% of dementia cases excent per vented by addressing modifiable risk factors such

brain health specialists on topics including dementia risk reduction strategies, the importance of cognitive screening, and maintaining brain health through lifestyle changes

changes.
The event will also offer free



DemCon 25 Website Inaugurated



DIA in the News

Urban dementia screening study highlights gaps in awareness and early detection

DECCANHERALD

Dementia India Alliance holds

screening

May 30, 2025

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పాగర్వగర్, న్యూప్ట్ టుడే: గీతం స్ట్ర వర్సెటీ ఇన్స్ట్ ట్యూట్ ఆప్ మెడికల్ న్యౌస్ ఆండ్ రీనెర్స్(జిమ్నర్) ఆత్ ద్రత్యేక పెబ్బెట్, గోడపత్రికను కార్యదర్శి ఎం. భరద్వాత్ మంగళ

ఇక్టర్ ఎన్.మా.రాజు, సీహార్. రికోర్టకుమార్, అమెసర్ ఆఫ రేషన్స్ విభాగాధిపతి డాక్టర్ కార్తిక్ మాల్వడారు. ఈ సమావేశాల్తో డెమె మార్వాలు. ఈ ఎమోఎళ్ళా డయి స్పోరూ ఇండియా అలయుగ్గ్(డేబఎ)తో అయుబంధం ఉన్న ప్రముఖ వైద్యస్సు జులు పాల్గొని వృద్ధావ్యంలో ఉన్నవారు ఎదుర్కొనే మలు అరోగ్య సమస్యలు తది తర వైద్య సంబంధిత అంశాలపై చర్చె సమరాంగ



CITY SHOULD INVEST IN INTERVENTIONS TO PREVENT DEMENTIA social isolation. Scientific evidence, including the Lancet Commission on Dementia Prevention, shows that 40-45% of dementia cases could be delayed or prevented by addressing 14 modifiablisk factors across the life course. These include hypertension, diabetes, smoking, physical inactivity, social isolation, stress, depression, hearing loss, low education, depression, Many of the risk factors are shared with cardiovascular disease, making integrated prevention strategies highly effective. Prevention must begin early, continue throughout life, and in volve multiple stakeholders, initiatives such as community.

ecent findings from the Dementia India Alliance (DIA)'s dementia screening in Bengaluru in association with Athulya highlight the need for proactive interventions. Among 716 individuals screened, 12.2% showed signs of cognitive impairment, with vascular comorbidities like hypertension and diabetes commonly observed in nearly 50% of the cohort. Early-onset trends among those aged 55-59 and the lack of awareness in recognising cognitive decline even in educated families are a matter of concern.

In low- and middle-income countries like India, the potential for prevention of dementia is high due to the high prevalence of risk factors like stress, sedentary life, cardiovescular factors, smoking, drinking, obesity, and

Dr Srikala Bharath | FORMER PROF OF PSYCHIATRY, N

Our Purpose (Why We Exist)

To bring help and hope to persons with dementia and their family caregivers

Our Missions (What We Do)

SERVICES to bring help & hope:

We will build, deliver and improve Services, that increase equitable access to early and accurate diagnosis, treatment, risk reduction and quality care, such

- 1. National Support Line & Online **Memory Clinic**
- 2. Dementia Screening for early diagnosis
- 3. Support Groups
- 4. Risk Reduction intervention
- 5. Technical support for setting up of dementia care services
- 6. Database of service providers
- 7. Capacity Building

PARTNERSHIPS to expand impact.

We will forge Partnerships with

- 1. Outreach Partners from different parts of India
- 2. Central and State Government departments and ministries
- 3. Certification Agencies
- 4. Academic Centres of Excellence and Research Institutions
- 5. Educational Institutions
- 6. International Agencies
- 7. Tech Companies
- 8. Associations

DIA's Bifocal Vision

BLUE BUTTON MOVEMENT to fight

We will craft and execute initiatives such as

- 1. Dementia Awareness events
- 2. Dementia Friendly Communities
- 3. Setting of Care Standards
- 4. Advocacy with Policy Makers and Influencers
- 5. Facilitation of dementia-friendly hospitals and healthcare facilities,
- 6. National and International Conferences

Our Culture (Who We Are)

BETTER TOGETHER

- **Inclusive Collaboration**
- Shared Learning



YOU FIRST

- Primacy of Stakeholder needs
- **Empowerment**
- **Honour Choices**
- Humility

COMPASSION

- Practical Assistance
- Care for the Uncared
- **Authentic Empathy**
- **Deliver Hope**



PURPOSEFUL INNOVATION

- Human-User Centric
- Future-Ready
- Leverage Technology
- Financial Viability



From the DIA Desk: What's New, and What's Next



- Brain Health Awareness Workshop in Delhi: July
- Training of Trainers in Bangalore: July
- Training of Trainers in Vizag: August
- Training of Trainers in Mumbai:
 August
- ElderCon: Geriatric Care Conference in Coimbatore: September
- National Consultative Stakeholder
 Meeting in Delhi: September
- International Federation of Ageing Conference in Cape Town:
 September
- World Alzheimer's Month Events:
 September
- Launch of HSSC Certified Dementia
 Care Training Programs: November

DemCon'25

Dementia Conference *Visakhapatnam*

Dementia Care:

From Awareness to Action

5th & 6th Dec 2025 at GITAM Institute of Medical Sciences and Research



Organized by





Hosted by



Knowledge Partner



Join Hands in Making a Difference As a national organization,

we need your support to promote the cause of dementia. Your encouragement is crucial in bringing help and hope to persons with dementia and their family caregivers. Here are some ways you can join the journey:

Family Carers & **Individuals:**

Join us as an individual affiliate

Students: Become a 'DemChamp' our youth advocates for dementia awareness

Health Care Professionals:

Access our certified training programs to deepen your expertise

Academic Institutions:

Collaborate with us to promote awareness and education around dementia

Hospitals:

Help build a dementia-friendly ecosystem by joining our dementia-friendly hospital network

Volunteer / Intern:

Your time and skills can make a significant difference.

Donate:

Support our Initiatives and help us reach more families in need.

Follow us:

Follow us on social media for updates and more.

Fundraise:

Rally your network to support vital dementia care services.

Join as an Outreach Partner of Dementia India Alliance

Organizations working in the field of Age Care are invited to partner with Dementia India Alliance to expand the reach of dementia care and create a meaningful impact in the community.

What is expected of outreach partners?



Collaborate to establish care services



Participate in conferences & campaigns



awareness programs & workshops



Promote Training Programs



Support & Facilitate DIA's **Initiatives**

What DIA Provides:



Technical Guidance for Services



SoPs for Programs & Services



Training at different levels



Volunteer & Intern **Placement**



Branding, Collaboration & Support

Dementia India Alliance

Dementia India Alliance

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