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### **From Secretary's Desk...**

**Dear Fellow Senior Citizens,**

Greetings to lead a good life amidst a stressful liveable environment. Digital literacy is emerging as backbone of upcoming lifestyle for all the age groups. Be it a preferred choice or a compulsion we all need to adopt to the current situation for being part of the dynamic "present". To the best of my knowledge; the National Digital Literacy Mission (NDLM) program of the Government of India is a very well conceived & ambitious plan aiming at making 10 lakhs people digitally literate across India. The program has two layers one for illiterates to Class 7th standard and another for Class 8th and above educated. The program also provides that 1 lakh people shall be given the training through NGOs, CSR funding and other options. However its eligibility criteria for the learners is limited for the age groups from 14 to 60 years!!!. Thus the senior citizens are not entitled beneficiaries from this scheme!!!. Such information dissemination amongst seniors also adds their distress arising out of the Government's vision of isolating senior citizens from the social fabric by not qualifying them to be digitally literate!!! In view of above; the first step in my mind is to approach the Government at an appropriate level for abolishing the upper age limit from the NDLM Program and make it open until the life transition stage. Besides AISCCON, all the affiliated forums, associations, federations are requested to pursue further with respective State Government Authorities to take up with Digital India and get the upper age limit abolished in the NDLM program. Any leads / updates on this are sportingly welcome.

In India, over 90% of the seniors are active ageing and below 10% are having limited self care capacity. The situation of the majority of seniors getting home confined due to COVID 19; for about six months by now; has caused many constraints in the lives of active seniors in the society. This may have even caused some seniors an undesirable inroads to the mental stress / dementia / Alzheimer related concerns due to home confinement as a compulsion in life. Anything that brings in hurdles in making life choices is stressful. It is therefore considered prudent to debate on the likely pathways for seniors to lead good lives despite being home confined as compulsion until the normalcy in the liveable environment gets restored. Accordingly we organised Webinar this month on Alzheimer Day, September 21, 2020. The ad-memoir of discussions are placed in this newsletter with a request for the dissemination of information.

During & post Webinar on Alzheimer day, we have received a couple of suggestions that are outlined in this newsletter. We would appreciate receiving inputs / recommendations on the implementation routes for finding a road map of action plan in unison of collective wisdom. Kindly note that CSR NewsLetters can also be downloaded from AISCCON website. The comments, queries from pro-active minds & mentors shall be sportingly reviewed for furtherance of our common endeavour. Best wishes to enjoy with your colleagues amongst over 700 million fellow senior citizens an International Day of Older Persons on October 01st. Stay in touch...

Cordially yours,

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## **Ad-Memoir of Alzheimer's Day Webinar held on September 21, 2020**

AISCCON organised its first Webinar on Alzheimer Day, September 21, 2020 from 530 pm to 645 pm. The webinar was participated by 55 dignitaries from all over India; a good number of them Presidents of our associated senior citizen forums, associations & federations. Manohar Lal Baharani, steered the proceedings with an opening remark stating Indian Vedic science preaches us that the mind grows with an ageing body to form better wisdoms and on the other hand medical sciences are researching on the Neurodegenerational concerns like Alzheimer, Parkinson's, Huntington's, dementia and more for over a century now. Immediately after a couple of guidelines for the participants and introduction of President AISCCON; proceeding commenced as follows.

In the Presidential address by Mr. Inder Mohan Bhalla. President AISCCON, besides welcoming the audience and praising the organisers of this forum namely Manohar Lal Baharani, M.K. Raina and Mr. TPR Unny; expressed that the family support and requisite help to Alzheimer / dementia patients is the best help. In its absence, Alzheimer centres should be developed with the help from State Federations. District associations should try for setting up at least one Centre to help Alzheimer patients. Mr. Bhalla also made an announcement that the three best Alzheimer Centres in India will be awarded by AISCCON in its Annual all India conference.

Thereafter Dr. SP Kinjawadekar, President Emeritus; addressing this august gathering through digital platform at the age of 87 years; is a living example before us of growing mind with ageing body. Dr. Kinjawadekar expressed concern on the impacts of Alzheimer as the patients lose control on themselves and not able to take self care besides the treatment is 3rd most expensive. He informed that the incidence of Alzheimer is more in North America.

Mr. Sailesh Mishra, Founder of Silver Innings; stated that there is need for early diagnosis, expressed concern on scarcity of youth care givers, emphasised the need to make caregivers a dignified profession, recommended some simple tips for brain activities besides maintaining good health, sleep and avoid being scare. He considers AISCCON to be in ideal situation to undertake the research activities and explore newer techniques such as music therapy, haldi, ayurvedic options and more for the ailments like dementia /Alzheimer/ any other of concerns to senior citizens.

Dr. Nasreen Rustomfram, Professor, TISS gave an oversight of research findings for mental health and described five critical aspects commencing with learn to encounter discrimination, participate in meaningful physical activities, maintain good quality of relationship, emotions and physical Health. She said that poverty is also one of the constituent that distorts mental health in Indian situation. On the life skills; be prepared for change, cultivate a habit of talking about the problems and anxiety, do upkeep physical health, develop an attitude of caring for others, continually develop life skills and be determined to act and take decisions.

Dr. Ritu Rana, Mission Head - Health, HelpAge India vouched for family members as the best option for caregiver services, gave simple behavioural tips while dealing with Alzheimer patients such as maintaining low visitors, talking simple and small sentences, seeking simple replies in yes or no. Dr. Ritu well responded to the questions raised such as whether Alzheimer is Genetic?, answer is 50-60% yes but balance are through acquisition as well. The early symptom of Alzheimer / dementia is forgetting the recent past events by the person.

Mr. DN Chapke, IP President stressed the need for global solutions to get in action using local level knowledge through local based organisations. There are 725 districts but only 30 are having chapters on Dementia; thus a great challenge to cope up with the demand. Mr. Chapke cited an example of organisation ACF in Vishakhapatnam who have acquired land for dementia institute and planning a project worth Rs. 2 Crore to take off soon after the normalcy is restored due to COVID19.

Mr. Bhanwar Seth, VP AISCCON from Rajasthan stated need for exercise, good diet, maintaining social life, regular medical check up and +ve attitude towards life to obviate ailments like dementia / Alzheimer, Mr. CW Deoras expressed that while we have many options and many organisations working for redressal of ailments in urban areas, 70% of elderlies reside in rural areas. AISCCON could consider undertaking research in rural areas of Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa and other States and come out with suitable measures to take care of ailments in the rural world. Mr. NS Jadon from Indore raised a couple of questions asking the main reasons, early symptoms etc., for Alzheimer that were nicely responded by Dr. Ritu Rana of HelpAge India.

On concluding remarks; Manohar Baharani stated that AISCCON and its affiliated senior citizen forums, associations, federations have immense pool of talents, working knowledge and many activities for serving the seniors concerns are underway but in fragmented and isolated situations. This seminar has been an attempt to synergise our complementary strengths for collective good of seniors. Therefore all those who could not place their view points / valuable inputs now are welcome to write through an e-mail their thoughts / views / inputs until end of this week i.e. September 26, 2020 and those shall be consolidated in firming up the findings of this Webinar. The webinar concluded with a positive note, thanking all. The participants responded for the need to have longer time of such proceedings say at least 90 minutes and also expressed desire for more frequent such arrangements on varied topics. Besides organising team of this Webinar intervening support came from Mr. Suresh Palgay, & Mr. Sarvesh Gupta of CSR Committee of AISCCON.

Soon after the Webinar, Besides President Mr. Inder Mohan Bhalla, appreciation were received from Mr. CW Deoras, Bilaspur, President, Chattisgarh Federation, Mr. VK Sharma, Life Member VNSS Ghaziabad & VP AISCCON, Mr. SP Karkara, Chairman, Punjab Federation, Ludhiana, Mr. NS Jadon, VP AISCCON Indore, Mr. MK Raina, VP AISCCON & Mr. Suresh Palgay, President, Shehjaar Homes, Haridwar.

### **Gist of recommendations received after the webinar are ...**

- More of such Webinars need to be put in the pipeline on the topics concerning the senior citizens.
- Organise Webinar exclusively to discuss the issues relating to the rural world. Through discussions in Webinar we can identify the priorities of the rural world concerns such as "malnutrition", "primary health", "digital literacy drive", "old age homes", "elder abuse", "caregiver training", "Livelihood projects and more issues of concern to senior citizens in rural domain.
- We should discuss, educate, and create awareness regarding Interaction, Behavioural issues with the Alzheimer / Dementia Patients.
- We should impress upon the MOSJE at the Centre and State Governments to encourage, promote, recognise and finance the CAREGIVERS Training Institutes. AT Nagpur one such Institute is working.
- AISCCON could consider venturing in caregiver training / service providers.

The above suggestions are from Mr. CW Deoras, President, Chattisgarh Federation and Mr. SK Sharma, Life Member VNSS Ghaziabad.

### **An appeal to all the Federations / Associations...**

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has announced an umbrella policy for senior citizens that is effective April 01, 2020. All new projects are to be submitted online by March 31, 2021 through the web site [www.grants-msje.gov.in](http://www.grants-msje.gov.in). The organisation should be registered with the statutory authorities including NITI Aayog, maintaining audited accounts, having a website and is open to inspection. 15000 Elderly Self Help Groups (ESHG) shall be eligible for grant of Rs.50,000 / year to each ESHGs for undertaking some activities such as running creches, teaching children in backward areas and more livelihood project options.

The grants for running mobile health care units is upto Rs.11.2 lakhs / year, for physiotherapy centre Rs. 17.48 lakhs / year, Day Care Centre Rs. 12.48 lakhs / year, Caregiver Training Centre Rs. 21.3 lakhs / year, Awareness generation Rs. 16.96 lakhs / year. NISD is empowered for the activities of caregiver training, awareness, workshop, helpline and related areas. There is budget of Rs.200 Crores is for 2020-21 and similar for the next year. Those who are interested please submit an online application through the web site [www.grants-msje.gov.in](http://www.grants-msje.gov.in). Those who find some shortfall in the pre-requisites are welcome to approach AISCCON for submitting online application on their behalf.

1/ Please go through the entire 77 page policy document of an umbrella policy for senior citizens and let us know the constraints observed in making the applications / developing the projects. AISCCON is willing submit online applications on your behalf.

2/ Kindly provide an up date on the CSR / other encouraging social activities.

3/ Chattisgarh Federation have requested for a project profile of the residential facility in operation for single status, senior ladies, economically deprived living in rural areas. Any one having the details and / or managing such facility; kindly share the details to us.

### **Food-for-thoughts for all Federations / Associations...**

1. Honourable Finance Minister recently announced that Government will set up "Public Health Lab" at Block levels and begin a program of "Manodarpan" for Children. Suggestions under Elderly Self Help Groups (ESHGs) scheme for the possible avenues for Senior Citizens to get involved in realisation of such endeavours are welcome.

### ***Sharing of experiences:***

1. On Alzheimer; Mr. Chidambara Rao, 85 years old and suffering from some dementia has submitted this information. He also underwent a course on understanding Dementia of Wicking University of Australia. He uses mostly Homeopathic and Ayurveda medicines. There are good medicines in Ayurveda for preventing, retarding or treating dementia. Tab mentat, Brahmi rasayan, Brahmi homeo dilutions, schuslers salts, saraswati lehyam are main remedies. He use them and find they have given an improvement. This can be thought of to avoid progression into Alzheimer's probably. There is one Dr Beach's flower remedy by name Olive, which may help. He considers that medical practitioners may consider adoption of these therapeutics.

2. Sneha Sandhya is a senior citizens organisation in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, associated with AISCCON for about 15 years. They have set up a medical trust with the name Age

Care Foundation (ACF) in 2012 to take to the doorstep of underserved and underprivileged senior citizens affordable health care. In the last 8 years, ACF has achieved commendable success within its limitations, in extending geriatric care and palliative care. They are operating 9 permanent geriatric clinics, covering 10 old age homes, extending palliative care at home for about 100 patients and maintaining a hospice with 8 beds in a Christian missionary hospital. Their activities include advocacy, awareness, training and health care, extended without any cost to the patients. They have over 2,000 registered geriatric patients and more than 600 patients availed their facility so far. Andhra Pradesh is uncharted territory in dementia care. ACF has identified a site for construction of a palliative and dementia care institute, has embarked upon raising resources from donors to the tune of Rs. 2 crore, and plans to solicit support from CSR funds and trusts for buildings, equipment and services. They have a plan to move into the second phase in two years and progress into the third phase in the third year.

### ***Brief guidelines for developing CSR projects:***

The following inputs are normally envisaged in a project proposal aimed at convincing the Corporate houses to grant funding under their Corporate Social Responsibility domain:

1. Personal information, brief profile & contact details of the Head of the organisation & key personnel involved in the ongoing activities of the Federation / Association.
2. Organisation details i.e. name, date of registration, nature of organisation, (whether Charitable Trust, NGO, Section 8 - not for profit company or any other ), city, brief on past experiences , achievements and current activities, current sources of revenue for undertaking the ongoing activities (from donors / volunteers / government support etc.,). Preceding three years statement of accounts.
3. Problem statement ; key drivers to resolve the concerns of elderlies in the region ; proposed strategy. The issue should have impacts on social fabric in quantifiable / measurable terms.
4. Project details - the facilities, implementation methodology, agencies in the implementation, organisation supervising the implementation, commissioning, taking over and project life time operations. The project ownership until its life cycle including sustainability is to be established.
5. Financial Analysis : For project implementation & operation, sustainability for project life cycle.
6. Meeting donors concerns for funds getting utilised in trust worthy, transparent and credible manner for the intended purpose, progress reporting on implementation and social impact analysis / benefits. Donors may have some specific guidelines on the reporting formats.
7. Credentials of the promoters of the project & organisation like past awards / certificates, recommendation letters from dignitaries, bank statements, home work done (like field survey / back up offers obtained for project implementation etc.,)

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