

## State Level Orientation Program on “WHO Guidelines on Wheelchair Service & Training Delivery”



An appropriate wheelchair can be the first step towards a better quality of life, inclusion and participation in the mainstream society for people with disabilities. Though wheelchair is one of the most commonly used assistive device, training opportunities for healthcare professionals is found to be limited. People often depend on donated wheelchairs. MI has been conducting orientation programs on WHO Guidelines- Wheelchair Service & Training

Delivery for sensitising professionals, policy makers and government authorities.

**MI** in collaboration with **Department of Empowerment of Differently Abled & Senior Citizens of Government of Karnataka** and **Disability NGOs Alliance (DNA)** organised a one day State level orientation program on 28<sup>th</sup> June for 37 officials from District Disability Welfare, Department of Empowerment of Differently Abled & Senior Citizens. The inauguration ceremony was presided by Mr B N Vijayakumar, MLA of the Jayanagar Constituency of Bangalore, Dr. Siddaraju, Director, Department of Empowerment of Differently Abled & Senior Citizen, Mr Charles Prabakar, President, Ms Romola Joseph, Secretary, Ms Sathyavathi Shamsuddeen, Member, Governing Body, MI, Mr Basavraj, Chief Executive Officer, DNA and Ms Albina Shankar, Director, MI.

Speaking about Accessible India Campaign, Dr Siddaraju mentioned “It is not only about making the government offices and public places accessible, making the assistive devices, government schemes concerned with healthcare and education also should be accessible and available for people”. He also stressed on the quality of assistive devices to be provided for people to lead a good quality of life.

“All these days I was under an impression that Wheelchair is given to people to move. Being a part of the program at Mobility India I understood how a wheelchair is of significance and varieties of wheelchairs on offer for people with varying conditions” spoke Mr B N Vijayakumar. He also encouraged the participants being the implementers to learn and understand the quality of different devices and application of the learning in practice.

# Accessible Transport Pathway to Opportunity



Accessible transportation is the key factor which ensures a safe and comfortable commute for the aging population and those relying on various assistive devices especially wheelchair users. It opens pathways to be included in mainstream society and all walks of life and lead a dignified and good quality of life. Inclusion of people with disabilities in all spheres of life

be far attainable without eliminating the accessibility issues in the public spaces, schools, colleges, workplaces as well as public transport.

'Accessible Mobile Van' initiative of MI, launched in 2000, provides an accessible commute facility in Bangalore. Ms Sminu Jindal, MD, Jindal SAW Ltd and Founder of Svayam Foundation gifts 3 accessible vans for MI. It will assist MI to cater to the emerging need for accessible commute.

## Family Fun Festival



MI's uniqueness from the inception has been always striving to remain connected with the service users, their parents and the community at large. Family Fun Festival is the unique initiative which aims to create awareness on importance of recreation for the people with disability and their family members. It also helps in facilitating friendships, development of leadership and collaboration skills.

Being involved in sport and recreational activities not only helps your physical health, but it can also facilitate the creation of friendships with people that you may otherwise not have met and the development of leadership and collaboration skills. Sports and recreation holds equal significance for people with disabilities as well as their care providers. 60 members involving parents, caregivers and grandparents of children with disabilities actively participated in the program and gained motivational information from successful parents of children with different disability. Play therapy was organized for the children and their parents.

Role of mother in one's life is inevitable. Mothers and grandmothers were honoured for ignoring their disability rather focusing on their special abilities.

# Equipping Professionals to cater to emerging need of Rehabilitation

The 2011 Nepal Census emphasise that 1.94% of total population experience some sort of disability while hardly 10-15% of them has access to healthcare and rehabilitation services. In Nepal disability is still believed to be the consequence of fate and god's will, which prevent them from accessing appropriate intervention. Situation Analysis on Disability in Nepal, 1999 indicated that 70% of Persons with Disabilities could not lead a dignified life, often discriminated in community and at workplaces.



The earthquake of 2015 even intensified the statistics and scenario of disability.

Growing up in a remote village of Nepal, 41 years old Krishna Raj has witnessed the situation of people with disabilities and the emerging need for rehabilitation. The interest to learn and serve to people with disabilities was the motivation for him to take up the Lower Limb Prosthetics Technologist Course in 2007 and Lower Limb Orthotics Technologist Course in 2010 at MI. He mentioned "In Nepal, disability is a growing field and due to increased awareness people are recognising us as professionals rather than shoe makers. I am glad that I am able to suffice the rehabilitation need in our region". He is currently engaged with Nepal National Social Welfare Association, an organisation working for Community Based Inclusive Rural Development and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities. To upgrade his knowledge and skill set Krishna was a part of the 4 and ½ months Upgradation training program at MI.

It was an eventful evening at MI on 16<sup>th</sup> June with the 6 graduates of 11th Batch of CAT II Diploma in Prosthetics & Orthotics and 10 alumni students completing the 4 and ½ months up gradation training program. The event was presided by Chief Guest Dr T Jagadish, Professor & Head of Dept. of Mechanical Engineering., Bangalore Institute of Technology, Mr Anil Singh from ICRC New Delhi, Ms Romola Joseph, Secretary, Governing Body, MI, Ms Albina Shankar, Director, MI, Ms Ritu Ghosh, Deputy Director, Training, MI.

Krishna Raj scored highest in the International Society of Prosthetics & Orthotics (ISPO) Practical exam. Ms Ayush from Yemen and Mr Jignesh from Ahmedabad, Gujarat acquired the second and third position in the practical exam. In the overall score, Mr Jignesh acquired the top position followed by Ms Rinku and Mr Krishna Raj Bhatt.

Ms Rinku from the first batch of training at MI in 2002, mentioned "this four and half month's duration of training was a great time to upgrade my knowledge and skills. It gives me confidence to do a better service delivery at my workplace in Howrah District, West Bengal.

Ms Ayush expressed "this is the best moment for me. I would like to specially thank my mother because of whom I am here in India to get training and thanks to Mobility India trainers too".

# Impacts of Community Education Centres



Education is a powerful instrument of social change, equipping children to meet the challenges of life. It is equally and substantially important for Children with Disabilities (CwDs) to supplement their differential talents to lead a healthy, safe and productive life. There has been numerous policies, schemes, regulations and acts under implementation to ensure education for all including those with disabilities. However

constraints such as poverty associated with disabilities, inadequate awareness on the provisions among parents and school personnel as well as limited training opportunities for tutors/teachers remain to the full participation of children at school and in the mainstream society.

The 'Community Education Centre' (CEC) initiative of MI across its community project areas has been a platform for children with & without disability to have an inclusive learning environment and succeed in academic and extra-curricular activities, groom them as advocates for the rights, entitlements and issues which affect them and at large the community. The CECs have enabled the students to influence the authorities at school, community and local governance to make their voices heard through children groups and children parliaments. Many of the passed out students with disabilities from the CECs are in various stages of higher studies and accessing better employment opportunities.

Education for children with disabilities can be achievable by ensuring better healthcare and rehabilitation services for them. Mi's 'Model Therapy Center' initiative aims at providing the required therapeutic interventions for children and people with disabilities.



There are 7 'Model Therapy Centers' operational in the government school premises of Chamrajnagar, Karnataka. The students with disabilities receive continuous therapy services as per their need. The scope of services also encompasses people with disabilities and elderly from the region.

# Mahabubbi- working towards Empowerment of Persons with Disability

Extensive learning & computers has been a great interest to Mahabubbi Soudagar. She resides in a small village Savanur with her parents.

She had Polio in an early childhood and resultant functional decline. Her father worked as a daily wager and financial constraints remained to get her appropriate medical intervention. But she was a lady of strong determination and deciding to stand against all the odds she completed her PUC with Nursery Teacher Training Course. While she was working in a cyber café at Goa, for the first time she received a calliper for mobility, which she found inappropriate later. She also came across various people with disabilities who needed appropriate assistive devices. This motivated her to work for people with disabilities in need.

Since 2013 she is Councillor for her village, which provided her the opportunity and authority to execute her plans and initiatives to foster a healthy and inclusive environment, generate opportunities for people with disabilities and continue social work.

Recently she received an appropriate Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis for her left lower limb at MI. Beaming with confidence she mentioned “this device will help me in improving my personal mobility and I can continue my work for the great cause to bring about holistic societal development in my village”.



## Play therapy

Play is often considered to be an age appropriate activity for children, though it holds equal significance for all age groups. The 'Play Therapy' initiative of MI aims at incorporating the person's physical abilities, cognitive functioning levels and emotional needs in a safe, supportive environment. It also allows people to learn how to interact with others and develop relationships.



Play therapy helps to decrease behavioural and emotional difficulties that interfere significantly with the normal functioning. Other goals include improved verbal expression, ability for self-observation, improved impulse control, more adaptive ways of coping with anxiety and frustration, and improved capacity to trust and to relate to others. In this type of treatment, the therapist uses an understanding of cognitive development and of the different stages of emotional development as well as the conflicts common to these stages. Play has been shown to optimize learning, enhance relationships, and improve health and well-being.

# Enabling Impacts of Play Therapy

Therapy can work wonders and 5 years old Dhruv is the absolute illustration of it. Dhruv resides in Bangalore along with his parents and elder sister with whom he shares a close bond. Usually Dhruv is a shy and silent kid but around his elder sister he becomes expressive. His father is an electrician and mother is a homemaker.

Episodes of seizure at the age of 9 months led to functional decline in Dhruv and he experienced delayed development. On time physiotherapy at Parijma physiotherapy centre helped improve his condition. At the age of 3 years Dhruv was brought to MI, at the stage of walking with wall support. Dhruv was quick enough to respond to the therapy exercises and soon started walking independently. Later he also received therapeutic interventions for improving his fine motor activities and speech.

The transformation from being a shy kid to a happily mingling kid who loves playing, sharing and showcasing his skills to fellow kids has been possible with the play therapy sessions. "Play therapy has been quite helpful in making Dhruv mingle with others. He has been independent in movement and soon he will be enrolled in school" mentions his mother.



# A Cosmetic Elbow Disarticulation Prosthesis for a Self-Reliant Life for Dharshan

16 years old Dharshan resides in Bangalore along with his parents and elder sister. Dharshan is pursuing PUC and is in the 1<sup>st</sup> year and his elder sister is about to complete her BSc degree. Dharshan's father drives auto to make the ends meet at home and is determined to get the quality education and a bright future for their children.

Dharshan had congenital elbow disarticulation and was born without fore arm for his right upper limb. During his early childhood, they were residing in a small village in Mandya District, Karnataka. There was very limited scope for rehabilitation and his mother mentioned "we were also not aware that artificial limbs and such services are available which will be helpful for Dharshan". Such scenarios are quite common in rural areas, due to which children remain deprived of early intervention and appropriate rehabilitation.

Dharshan is a bright kid right from his childhood. He used to use his left upper limb for most of his tasks and for writing at school. Absence of his right hand never been a hindrance to proceed in education and in life.

Recently his family shifted to Bangalore and came to know about rehabilitation services provided at MI. After a thorough assessment, he was provided with an elbow disarticulation cosmetic prosthesis at MI for the very first time in life. Wearing the Prosthetic Limb, Dharshan beamed with joy & confidence. The Prosthesis will help him lead a good quality life, access higher education and achieve his dreams.



# In Conversation with Mr Suresha - An International Sports Champion

There is often a social stigma associated with participation of People with Disabilities in Sports.

A road accident in 1994, at the age of 28 left Mr Suresha confined to bed for 2 years. Fast forward, today he has several Gold & Silver Medals at International Sports Championships to his credit.

*You must have been clueless about your future...*

*Being unable to move, I felt stuck at the time & place. In 1996, I visited Mobility India as per a friend's suggestion. Since then my life has taken on a new track*

*Share with us your journey and Mi's role in it*

*I am able to stand on my feet again and the credit goes to Mobility India for providing me Assistive Devices (Orthoses) as and when I required. I regained my self-confidence and determined to pursue Sports-a long cherished dream from my childhood. I started participating in Javelin & Discus Throw at State and National Levels and my achievements paved my way to International Championships. Today I enjoy a successful career in Sports. I am a proud father of two lovely daughters and has been engaged with Central Power Research Institute in Bangalore. And all this has been possible through the Assistive Devices from Mobility India. A Big Thank You!*



## Donate

- Developmental Aid per unit.....Rs. 1,600-5,500
- Assistive Devices (Calipers, artificial limbs, crutches, walkers)..... Rs.2,500-15000
- Wheelchairs.....Rs. 15,000-20,000
- Nutritious food .....Rs. 1,000-2,000
- Therapy Services per session.....Rs. 350
- Education per child per year.....Rs.2,000-5,000
- Any amount you wish to contribute

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