Kerala State Initiative on Dementia (KSID) - “Smruthipadham”

**Coordinated by:** Government of Kerala, Social Justice Department (SJD) and the Alzheimer’s and Related Disorders Society of India (ARDSI)

**Date:** 25th September 2014 onwards

**Objectives:**
- To maximise utilisation of locally available resources and personnel and with existing infrastructure enable identifying, assessing, managing and supporting people with dementia and their families;
- To incorporate dementia training in various training programmes held by the health service department;
- To disseminate awareness on dementia to health workers through Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) by including dementia in the syllabus of annual training program of Child Development Program Officers (CDPOs/supervisors, Anganwadi workers, Kudumbasree workers, Community Nurses in the Local Self Govt. Institution (LSGIs) and National Social Service (NSS) program Coordinators;
- To start community dementia memory clinics;
- To make an assessment of the elderly people with dementia requiring dementia care by the Health workers and ASHA workers in the annual household survey in their respective field area and provide advice and referral;
- To prepare contents of various Information, Education & Communication (IEC) materials for distribution among the public;
- To establish state Dementia Helpline;
- Research and Development.

**Action taken during the campaign:**
ARDSI joined hands with the Government as a knowledge partner to enhance public knowledge through campaigns about Dementia and through model activities.

a. ARDSI evolved content for IEC materials on dementia and designed it for the State Government and took up the responsibility of its dissemination across the state to reach out to the common public as part of its agreed first mandate. Content for Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for dementia care centres; Manual for Health Workers; Brochure – 3 stages of dementia were also prepared for them.

b. A Full time Dementia care centre and one Dementia Day care centre at two different locations were enabled by ARDSI. Right staff were identified, recruited and trained with continuous support supervision by ARDSI staff. Dementia friendly furnishing of these centres were also completed. Both these centres together are now housing around 20 patients. Based on the successful intervention 3 more centres have been sanctioned and 7 more are to be approved with plans to start centres in all districts.

c. The “I am a Dementia Friend campaign” covered a distance of more than 2150 km spanning 14 districts in a vehicle specially designed for this purpose.
The campaign, distributed warning signs messages through pamphlets, displayed notices, and talks were delivered. Collaboration with Social Justice Department, Indian Psychiatric Society (IPS) and Kerala Neurologist Association (KAN) enriched the content value in reaching out to common public with precise messages on Dementia clearing misconceptions and fallacies. The campaign was very well received which culminated in the State Capital, Thiruvananthapuram in a valedictory function attended by the State minister for social welfare. ARDSI Memory Clinic Guidelines was also released in the function. “I am a Dementia Friend Pledge” was taken by all participants and in schools by students.

Problems/challenges encountered:
➢ Non availability of suitable Government infrastructure to start dementia care centres;
➢ Non availability of suitable dementia friendly accommodation as per the specifications for hiring.

Significant results/outcomes:
1. The people across the State received more awareness about Dementia and myths were dispelled;
2. Distributed Information, Education and Communication materials through Govt. machinery and various programs organised by Social Justice Department and ARDSI during World Alzheimer’s Month September;
3. The concerted efforts helped to impart the necessity of early and proper diagnosis by recognising its symptoms at the early stage itself and giving proper medical and social care;
4. Imparted classes to Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), Kudumbasree, Anganwadi workers & National Social Service (NSS) coordinators helped to remove the social stigma attached to this illness in the society and to create a positive change in the attitude of general public;
5. Understanding the nature and severity of the illness helped the caregivers to improve the quality of care.

Lasting impact:
➢ Since this is an ongoing state wide project, the perception of stakeholders involved has been changed;
➢ Though the positive impact could not be tangibly measured, knowledge levels about the Dementia has definitely gone up;
➢ The officials dealing with health issues are sensitised and cooperative as they learnt more about the disease and caregiving issues;
➢ This campaign has raised the credibility of ARDSI as a knowledge resource and has resulted in more care centers throughout the state;
➢ The memory screening protocol evolved by ARDSI has been accepted for practice by medical institutions;
➢ YES. It is indeed a remarkable achievement of ARDSI in planning, executing and achieving the desired results with full support of Social Justice Department, Govt. of Kerala.