

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
CHANDIGARH ADMINISTRATION**

Press Release

Chandigarh, 13th October, 2017: Every year thousands of people die from cancer and other distressing illnesses. For many of those, the end of life is filled with pain, anxiety and financial hardship. Regardless of social standing, both patients and families are affected it could happen to any of us. Instead of good pain relief, control of symptoms and a dignified death, these patients are frequently either turned away from hospitals or admitted to intensive care units for expensive treatments which only prolong their suffering. Such patients deserve Palliative Care, the medical speciality which cares for those with advanced incurable illness. This care strives to address the physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs of patients and also to provide support to their families.

Looking into scenario, Chandigarh Palliative Care Service was started as a joint project of Red Cross Society, U.T., Chandigarh Branch and Department of Radiotherapy, PGIMER, Chandigarh. The aim of the project is to Integrate Palliative Care into Comprehensive Cancer Care and provide Continuity of Care to the cancer patients.

The services are being offered in three settings- Out Patient Clinic, Home Care Service and Hospice. Palliative Care Out Patient Clinic functions in Radiotherapy Department, PGIMER where the patients are jointly seen by the Palliative Care team and the Oncologist.

Home Care Service- Terminally ill cancer patients prefer to stay in their own home and surroundings, so for these patients who are unable to visit the hospital, the Red Cross team visits them in their homes in the Tricity. The visits are provided on need basis. A family support is an important component of Palliative Care, bereavement support is also provided through the home care team.

Terminally ill cancer patients who attend the Out patient Clinic for their pain and symptoms management and who cannot be managed in the OPD and need institutional care are admitted to Chandigarh Hospice. Even patients under home care services who cannot be managed at home and need end of life care are admitted to the Hospice. In order to create a homely atmosphere for patients and their caregivers, all festivals are celebrated in the Hospice. Small family get-

together and celebrations of patient's birthdays, anniversaries are also organized . Group activities like Art of living Satgung, sessions of relaxation and breathing exercises etc are held for the patients and their relatives. More than 15000 new cancer patients haven been served under the project till date with numbers increasing every year.

General satisfaction of the patients & their relatives and immense support from community for day to day running of Hospice has been the hallmark of this project.

World Hospice and Palliative Care Day is a unified day of action to celebrate and support hospice and palliative care Services around the world. It is celebrated on the second Saturday of October each year. As part of Hospice Day Celebrations, a documentary has been made by Ms. Shivani Dhillon, one of the volunteers of Hospice, who lost her father to cancer. He was under care of Chandigarh Palliative Care Service. It was shot at different palliative care facilities in Chandigarh. It shows that today, with new drugs and a collaborative approach to care, palliative care programs can provide comfortable and meaningful end of life experiences for patients and their families. This documentary can be viewed on you tube with the following link <http://youtu.be/BlaDKVacpel>.

Let us all join hands , as this is an issue that affects us all, because we would like our lives & the lives of those we love- to end peacefully &comfortably