

CHRONICLES OF COMPASSION

Institute of Palliative Medicine

JUNE 2025

Phone: +91 495 2354166 Email: palliativecare@gmail.com

Web: instituteofpalliativemedicine.org | ipmcalicut | fb: [Institute of Palliative Medicine](https://www.facebook.com/InstituteofPalliativeMedicine)

EDITORS DESK

Dear Friends,

2025 is the year of collaboration, teamwork, and success!

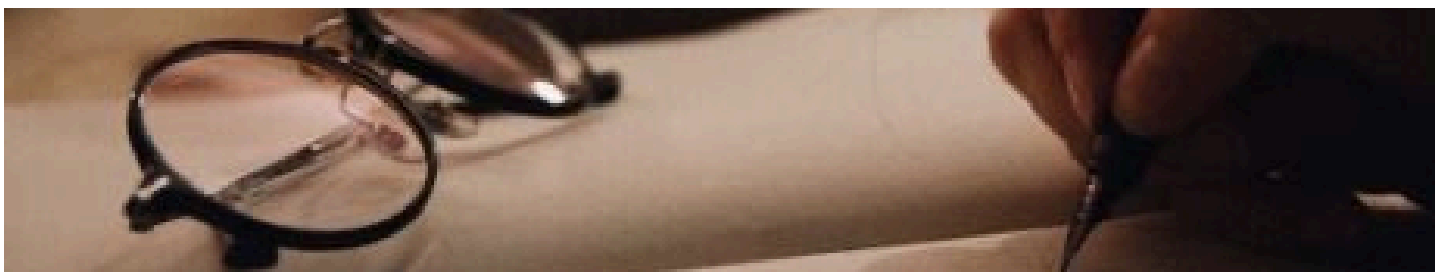
A new partnership between IPM and the Kerala Chapter of the Indian Institute of Architects, 'Fellowship in Compassionate Spaces' is a unique online learning program that focuses on creating spaces fostering empathy, compassion, and inclusion.

IPM has signed an MOU to support the Kampong Palliative Care in Singapore by providing educational resources and training programs. This alliance will focus on enhancing palliative care services by building capacity for psychosocial support for individuals with life-limiting illnesses, their caregivers, and families. Dayapuram Educational & Cultural Centre believes in the holistic development of students and has collaborated with IPM to train students in palliative care. This novel initiative integrates palliative care into the school curriculum to foster a culture of care and compassion among the youth. Highlighting IPM's role in developing the Kerala Model in India and abroad, two teams, from Manipur and Japan, visited IPM to learn about community-based palliative care. Julia, a medical professional from Spain, completed an internship to gain knowledge and hands-on experience in caring for and supporting patients and their families. IPM's model of compassionate care resonates deeply with my values as a clinician, she said. Friendships are valuable and deserve recognition! Chloe from the UK will soon be launching a new cookbook with fresh, local, and vegetarian recipes. The book will be available at IPM, with all proceeds going towards palliative care. She and Parvathy are also evaluating the Caregivers Training Program to assess its real-world impact and effectiveness, and areas for improvement.

The year has been full of possibilities. By working together, collaborating, and sharing common goals, there's no limit to what we can achieve.

Thank you!

Anjali Cherian



Pages of Compassion: A Students Initiative



A new initiative by students, the plan involves purchasing notebooks at wholesale prices, selling them at a slightly higher retail price, and donating the difference (profit) to support palliative care at IPM. The project was launched in May just prior to the reopening of schools and colleges after the summer holidays and aims to generate funds to contribute to a charitable cause while offering products at competitive prices.

This new fundraising initiative, driven entirely by student volunteers, showcases their creativity and dedication towards the palliative care. Over 80 students attended the first meeting and many more from over 20 colleges in and around Calicut are involved in this campaign. Exploring a number of residential neighborhoods and talking about the need to support palliative care, student volunteers have worked hard to attract more customers and maximize orders. So far, of the initial 2000 notebooks that were bought, around 200 have already been sold.

We would like to recognize and appreciate the invaluable contributions

of student volunteers who selflessly give their time and energy to the palliative care cause.

Thank you!

OISCA Award for Dr Suresh Kumar



Dr Suresh Kumar (Director IPM) was presented with the 'Sudheera Memorial OISCA Award' on March 22 nd, 2025 at a function held at IPM. Mr. Thottathil Raveendran (Hon. MLA, Kozhikode North) presented the award (a cash prize and a citation) in the presence of several other guests including Thomas Mathew (Corporation Councilor Adv.), Sathiapalan K.K. (Secretary PPCS), M C Das (Assistant Passport Officer Retd), and C Satheesh Kumar. We would also like to thank Philip K Antony, P V Anoop, and G K Venu for attending this event on behalf of OISCA.

The award from OISCA International recognizes Dr Suresh Kumar's exceptional leadership in providing compassionate and holistic palliative care while focusing on improving the quality of life for patients and their families facing life-threatening illnesses. The award also acknowledges Dr Suresh's effort in pioneering community- based palliative care programs and in the training of healthcare professionals to enhance the quality of life of patients and their families.

Thanking OISCA, Dr. Suresh Kumar said that this award will generate more awareness in IPM and the work it does which will lead to more understanding and cooperation from the public towards palliative care.

Evaluating the Caregivers Training Programme

By Parvathy P

In January 2025, IPM initiated its first formal evaluation of the Caregivers Training Programme, a 3-day skill- building course designed to equip community members with essential knowledge and practical skills in palliative care. Since its inception, over 6000 individuals including students, ASHA workers, community volunteers and healthcare professionals have been given this training.

Led by Chloe Tuck, a graduate scholar in public health from the University of Sheffield (UK), the evaluation aims to understand the real-world impact of the training, how it has sensitized and enabled participants within their homes and communities, and how the programme can be enhanced in future. Findings are expected to benefit not just local efforts in Kozhikode but also for international partners and WHO on how this model can be adapted in other settings.

The study began with a qualitative phase - 10 in-depth interviews and 4 focus group discussions with 35 participants who have been receiving training since 2017. Preliminary findings show that the training has significantly improved communication skills, empathy, and community engagement far beyond clinical care settings.

For more details or to get involved, contact:

chtuck1@sheffield.ac.uk OR pparvathy93@gmail.com

Fellowship in Compassionate Spaces

While the term 'space' is commonly associated with architects and is traditionally understood as the structure of a building defined by walls, floors, and ceilings; the term 'compassion' is the cornerstone of good-quality palliative care as it offers a patient-centric approach to relieving the suffering and improving the quality of life for patients and their families. 'Compassionate spaces' emphasize the creation of environments that foster empathy, understanding, and a sense of care and support for everyone throughout their lives. The 'Fellowship in Compassionate Spaces' is a first-of-its-kind, unique online learning program designed to explore the strategies and philosophies behind creating compassionate communities. This course draws from diverse disciplines like palliative care, architecture, sociology, psychology, and philosophy, and aims to improve the quality of life for individuals facing life-limiting illnesses by fostering environments that promote inner well-being and compassion-driven design. The program was launched in May. IPM believes in a holistic approach to palliative care and collaborates with many organizations, like the police, students, and even political parties to achieve this goal.

Let's Grow Together

The Indian Institute of Architects (IIA) Kerala Chapter is a state-wide body of architects who have always been receptive to work with other like-minded organizations in creating spaces that are accessible, inclusive and supportive. However, a profound personal experience for one of the architects saw a group of them visiting IPM and participate in a session on 'Design & Healing' with Dr. Suresh Kumar (Director). Dr. Suresh spoke candidly about human fallibility and how palliative care is often the only form of care available to those who are in pain and suffering. The sessions were a transformative experience and the architects have committed to promote socially conscious designs and prioritize sensitivity and wellbeing in their work. We will also be working with them to explore a relationship between inner and outer spaces i.e. the space within us and that around us.

Collaboration, Partnership and Working Together

The first joint initiative was the Oasis Design Competition for Young Architects, a contest for creative ideas to renovate, enhance and optimize the infrastructure at IPM. Urban Precinct Design Studio a firm from Bangalore won the first prize in a national-level design competition where multiple firms submitted their design concepts to a global jury. IPM is in the process of renovation and will soon feature spaces that promote compassion and enhance its ongoing care activities. Another project was the 'Death Café for Architects' a program that has helped architects to reflect on death and dying and begin conversations about the role of design in spaces and environments that provide peace and comfort when we are alive and at the end in our final moments.

Building For a Better Tomorrow

This partnership is a commitment between architects and palliative care to create environments that value diversity and foster social empathy by designing with empathy, compassion, and inclusion. The aim is to design spaces that are sensitive to the needs of the living, dying, caregivers and communities and this requires a holistic approach that prioritizes accessibility, comfort, and inclusivity first. Speaking on the importance of this collaboration, Dr. Suresh Kumar said that, "Palliative care aims to enable people to live and die with dignity, and this involves more than just medical treatment. It is about enhancing physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, a collective effort that requires the involvement of everyone".

Manipur Team Visits IPM



Scan the QR or click the link to know More
<https://bit.ly/4j2EMgJ>

Manipur, like Kerala, is a state with strong community ties and social support systems. Bearing this in mind, the Government of Manipur NHM (National Health Mission) sponsored a team on a learning visit to IPM Calicut to strengthen existing facilities at AAM/PHCs and develop volunteer-led community-based palliative care services. A team of 9 people, including doctors, nurses, and Program Managers, led by Dr Laimayum Tilakeswari Devi (State Nodal Officer - NPPC Manipur) visited IPM Calicut from March 12th to 16th, 2025.

Key Outcomes of the Team's Visit to IPM

1. Having completed an intensive TOT (Training of Trainers) program the participants are now Certified Trainers having acquired the necessary training and skills to train others and initiate similar palliative care services in Manipur. They have already started state-level training programs for medical officers, staff nurses, and community health officers.
2. Enhanced skills and knowledge in palliative care by focusing on clinical care, symptom management, effective communication, and proper program implementation.
3. Have the opportunity to observe how local self-government bodies engage and support community palliative care by helping to mobilize resources and gain community trust.
4. Strengthen palliative care services in Manipur by fostering community-led models and home-based palliative care and integrate them with existing health outreach programs.
5. Although challenges like geographical remoteness, limited manpower, and funding constraints remain, a phased implementation, starting in one or two districts with support from NGOs and government health missions is being worked out.

Global Partnerships in Palliative Care

The Kampong Palliative Care (KPC) in Singapore is a community-driven initiative that is focused on strengthening psychosocial support for individuals, caregivers, and families. The initiative aims to enhance the quality of life and well-being of individuals by creating a compassionate and supportive environment for people with life-limiting illnesses or requiring end-of-life care.



Scan the QR or click the link to know more about Global Partnership In Palliative care
<https://bit.ly/4j2EMgJ>

Team from Japan visits IPM



This was Professor Satoko's third visit! During her earlier visits in 2023, she and the team had observed the remarkable dedication, passion and hard work by IPM to engage and collaborate with local community members for Neighborhood Networks in Palliative Care (NNPC), a community-led initiative that empowers local communities to provide home-based palliative care to all those in the community. Returning to IPM, the purpose of the visit was to understand Kerala's community-based palliative care model, including its current practices and future directions, with a focus on home care and other related community development programs. The goal was to study and analyze programs initiated by IPM that have been designed to foster community involvement, collective action, and improve the well-being of the community by making it stronger and more connected.



Scan the QR or click the link to know
More
<https://bit.ly/4j2EMgJ>



Reflections on the IPM experience:

1. Fundamentally all individuals are people and people are inherently good! This means that people are not simply defined by their professional roles be it nurses, doctors, or drivers and that each us has enough compassion to care for those who need it.
2. The aim at IPM goes beyond individual acts of volunteering by understanding how collective efforts can transform social systems and cultural norms to benefit the whole community.
3. Student volunteers engaged in community service have found a sense of purpose and belonging. Their involvement has lead to new ideas and approaches in various palliative care programs that have benefited both patients and the community

Bereavement Companionship Program (BCP)

Bereavement support is essential when coping with death & this program aims to increase access to support services in local communities and neighborhoods by creating a network of 'bereavement companions' who have the scientific knowledge and skills to support one another through this journey of grief. Conceptualized jointly by IPM and the Death Literacy Institute (DLI) in Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic, BCP is a unique initiative that envisages having at least one trained person as a bereavement companion and among the first responders in case of a death. The course format is a two-day (16-hour) interactive workshop that aims to build a workforce of community members who can provide care and support to anyone grieving the loss of a loved one by addressing their feelings and emotions with compassion and empathy. The programs have become so popular that they are now held every month at IPM.

In May, over 30 participants, including doctors, nurses, and counselors, etc, attended the BCP course. Anoop MA, a participant who works as a mentoring psychologist, believes that the program has helped him acquire new knowledge and enhance his techniques and skills, which have ultimately helped him provide better care to his patients. The program also helps to address mental health in a better way by increasing awareness of effective communication by fostering more interactive and effective participation. 'BCP should be mandatory for everyone interested in palliative care,' he said.

Palliative Care for School Students: A Training Initiative

This new initiative aims to teach kindness, empathy, and compassion by creating awareness and integrating palliative care into the school curriculum.

On the project, C T Adil, a Dayapuram volunteer, writes about the collaboration.

- **How would you introduce Dayapuram Educational and Cultural Centre?**

Adil: Dayapuram Educational and Cultural Centre was built by volunteers in 1984 with the guidance of the scholar and philanthropist from Qatar, Sheikh Ansari 1984. We have been working for the educational empowerment of orphans, destitute, financially deprived and socially backwards students. Dayapuram bought its 40 acres of land and built the initial part of the buildings purely from donations, and the volunteer workers ran the place out of their commitment to social justice, communal harmony and women's education.

- **How did you get connected with the Institute of Palliative Medicine?**

Adil: Dayapuram has instituted an award called "Sheikh Ansari Award" for cherishing those who work selflessly, effectively and in a sustained manner over the decades. The award committee, headed by Dr. M M Basheer, collects recommendations from the members of the Dayapuram community. The committee received some recommendations that IPM be considered for the award last year, and in Kozhikode, the award was presented to the IPM by noted writer N S Madhavan on May 11th, 2024. This got both organisations together in conversations in the initiative of our volunteer, N P Ashley. Dayapuram volunteers have been quite appreciative of the good work IPM has been doing in different parts of the region, and getting to know them further only increased this. Students and teachers of Dayapuram visited IPM last year, and later, the IPM team also visited Dayapuram. These visits made the bond between the two entities, built on voluntary work, stronger.



Scan the QR or click the link to know More

<https://bit.ly/4j2EMgJ>

FRIENDS FOR LIFE

In this Newsletter, we focus on two inspiring human interest stories that demonstrate that even small acts of kindness can make a big difference. These accounts of compassion have touched our patients' lives—and our hearts. At the tender age of only 12 years,

Anand: The Little Genius Artist

Anand realized how sick his grandmother was when she became a patient at IPM. Regular homecare support was provided to enable her to live comfortably and safely at home, despite health challenges. During a homecare visit, the vehicle driver noticed Anand drawing quietly but intently from the corner of the verandah.



Scan the QR or click the link to know More

<https://bit.ly/4luudEn>

IFTAR PARTY: BREAKING FAST, BUILDING BONDS!

A heartfelt Iftar gathering filled with joy, good food, and togetherness was organized at IPM during the holy month of Ramadan. The event this year brought together more than 300 people including patients, caregivers, more than 30 Footprint members, over 100 student volunteers, staff, senior volunteers, and a 14 member team from Manipur who were visiting IPM to learn about palliative care. Their collective presence made a meaningful difference - and reminded us how powerful community support can be.

Student volunteers also set up a lively Ramadan stall selling pickled mangoes and sharbat (a sweet and refreshing traditional Indian drink) adding a sense of fun and vibrancy to the occasion. The atmosphere was buzzing with laughter and cheers with everyone making new friendships, sharing stories, and creating new memories.



Beyond Borders: Palliative Care Training at IPM



During a homecare visit

Julia, a medical professional specializing in Geriatric Medicine (health care of elderly individuals), visited IPM on an internship program from March 3rd to April 5th, 2025. This internship in palliative care aimed to provide hands-on experience for developing practical skills and clinical training in the care and support to patients and their families. IPM's model of care of, integrates volunteers, families, and healthcare professionals to deliver compassionate care resonated deeply with my values as a clinician, said Julia.



Afternoons spent carefree

Scan the QR or click the link to know More

<https://bit.ly/4j2EMgJ>



COMPASSIONATE CURRIES

This was an idea by Chloe, who had come from the UK to IPM, and this is her way to bring greater awareness to palliative care and the work of IPM. The idea is to freely share something we can all enjoy that can also bring people together. It was surprising to find that the food served at IPM food is so nice, food is fresh, local, and vegetarian, and many people, especially visitors from abroad, enjoy and want to learn these recipes. Usually, food served at hospitals is bland due to dietary restrictions. So many of the recipes from the canteen are delicious, particularly breakfast, which is unique here and is so different that most people wouldn't have tried these recipes anywhere else. There are so many interesting rituals, like serving food on a banana leaf is nice and unusual for people from elsewhere.

This idea is all about learning about the food culture while also supporting a palliative care initiative. The plan is to develop a short cookbook, so we are inviting staff, volunteers, and supporters from IPM to share their favorite local recipes. This can be using photos, videos, written, or spoken. And the link will be shared. Once everything is finalized, it will be put together as a book available at IPM for visitors and will act as fund fundraiser for the needs of IPM. Look forward to hearing everyone's input coz everyone here comes together as a team, and this is a team effort from the community and for the community.

By PARVATHY P