

Indian Head Injury Foundation

Newsletter (Jan - Jun 2016)



Greetings Dear Readers,

The first half of 2016 has been very eventful and fruitful, and we look forward to much more in the latter part of the year. IHIF steadfastly continues in its march to spread awareness about the prevention of head injuries and brain trauma through different forms of communication. We also continue in our unwavering mission to provide high quality rehabilitation to a large number of victims of head and spinal injuries throughout the year.

2016 kicked off with our very prestigious "Ride to Safety Campaign" in collaboration with ICICI Lombard. We had been planning this Event for a while and were eager to set it off. The Campaign was a grand success and we hope the students, teachers and parents we interacted with, further spread the message of road safety, while continually imbibing it in their own lives.

In January, The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways started a new Road Safety Forum consisting of NGOs that are active in this field. We are one of the Members of this forum which was inaugurated by Shri Nitin Gadkari. We are confident that the synergy built through this forum and our association with likeminded Stakeholders will make a difference in the mortality rate due to road traffic accidents and head injuries in India.

In other news, our very own Rehab Advisor, Dr. Tarun Lala received a highly regarded qualification which is the NDT/Bobath Certificate for a Course in the Management and Treatment of Adults with Hemiplegia and Head Injury. This will help in adding value to the Services that we provide and will also upgrade the skills of our other Therapists in dealing with head injury and neurological patients at the IHIF Delhi and Jodhpur Rehab Centres.

One of our dedicated volunteers Christa Gianfrancesco, a dental student, working on a Masters Program in Public Health at Columbia University, NY, worked with IHIF for seven weeks on developing an oral health education program. She also worked on the development of education material for use by children and adults who have special needs. We whole-heartedly support her in her future endeavors. Another dedicated Volunteer, Mr. Arun Srivastava was honoured with a Road Safety Championship Award from Sanofi India Limited. On behalf of IHIF, he has educated over 3,000 road users in Aligarh and neighbouring areas of U.P. about benefits of adopting preventive safety measures on our Roads. The training material has been provided by IHIF.

20th March was World Head Injury Awareness Day. IHIF celebrated the Event in a big way with a large motorcycle rally in Mumbai, sponsored by ICICI Lombard and in conjunction with three other NGOs. The aim was to encourage young children who ride pillion, to wear helmets and further spread the message on ways to prevent head injuries and mortality. We're confident our message on road safety and preventing head injuries is being heard far and wide. During this period, we also conducted a "Patient Support Group Meet" for our patients, their families

and Care Givers. The main theme was “how to live life happily” even after suffering debilitating and lifelong after effects of head and spinal injuries.

April kicked off with the World Autism Day. It being a Neuro-developmental Disorder, we have worked with many children affected by Autism. To spread Awareness on this subject, we had an intimate gathering with autistic children and their families at IHIF DCWA Rehabilitation Centre in Delhi, which is a free service provided by us. The children and families were served high tea to commemorate the day. We also held a two day course on Primary Trauma Care and a disaster drill for First Responders at the Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur. Hands-on training helped the under training first responders understand the various situations that they could find themselves in.

Finally, the Good Samaritan Notification has come to fruition. Save Life Foundation alongwith a number of NGOs including IHIF emphasized and advocated on the Government and the Supreme Court to bring this into force. It is now binding on all States and Union Territories of India, and that is a huge win. If anyone now helps a road accident victim, he should expect to be treated with respect by hospitals, the courts and the police. Another feather in our cap is the modernization, expansion, and upgradation of our rehabilitation centres in Jodhpur and Delhi with the financial backing of our dear supporters and well wishers.

The first six months of 2016 were inundated with resolve and success. We enthusiastically look forward to our activities in the latter half of 2016 and promise they will only be bigger and better. We also request you to write to us and share your views and ideas on how we can do things better. Whilst many things good have happened during this period, there is a bitter and sad part which keeps our feet on the ground. We are distressed to see the latest figures on mortality on our roads which show that there has been nearly a 2% increase in deaths in 2015 as compared to the previous years. This is depressing for all stakeholders. We shall keep trying to reverse the situation and hope to see some good news in the figures in 2016.

Just before I sign off, I wish to share with you that IHIF has been accepted as a Member of the Global Alliance of NGOs for Road Safety. This is a feather in the cap of our dedicated Staff who have worked tirelessly in the preceding years.

Cmde Ranbir Talwar
Executive Director

Ride to Safety Campaign

We at IHIF supported by ICICI Lombard and in conjunction with TRAX NGO launched a Ride to Safety Campaign to educate 4,000 students about road safety, the prevention of head injuries, and the benefits of using helmets when travelling by two wheelers. Apart from educating children, we also conducted multiple sessions for parents and teachers on the importance of wearing helmets themselves and doing the same for their offsprings.

We commenced work on 20 January 2016. During the course of the two month campaign our teams visited 19 schools and distributed (for free) over 3,021 ISI Certified high quality helmets to students who regularly travel by two wheelers as pillions. Over 3,900 students and over 2,000 parents attended our campaign and that is no mean achievement.

We strongly believe that the root to most solutions is through the welcoming hearts and minds of our youth. It is precisely through them that we are spreading awareness on road safety and head injury prevention. And needless to say, they are a delight to work with!



Primary Trauma Care Course and Disaster Drill at Mehrangarh Fort



A two day Primary Trauma Care Course and Disaster Drill for First Responders was held on 16 & 17 April 2016 at Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur. A team led by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, our Medical Director, set up camp at the Fort and conducted this programme with the support of three doctors and support staff from Apollo Hospitals and the US Embassy School in Delhi.

The aim was to further educate the staff of Mehrangarh Fort and Rajdadisa Hospital in primary trauma care, first response and disaster management. Our team highlighted the necessity of having trained first responders at multiple locations so as to prevent head injury and brain trauma, and subsequently managing the safe evacuation of the injured to a hospital in the Golden Hour. The end result was that those who were trained were able to triage, treat and transport ten victims safely within 22 minutes.

During the first day, the course consisted of practical hands-on-training on special mannequins & on other volunteers, and thus delivering the basics of Primary Trauma Care. Internationally recognized triaging cards were used to sort the multiple injured victims based on their medical condition and then sequentially transporting them to the hospital. Subsequently, the participants were given a number of customized trauma scenarios to practice their new skills. On the second day, a practice session on Disaster Drill was conducted.

In conclusion, IHIF gifted 6 fully equipped first responder bags to the Fort and Hospital Staff, First Responder Certificates were awarded to all the participants who successfully completed the two day course.

Modernization of Rehab Centres in Delhi & Jodhpur



Our valued Supporters will be pleased to know that IHIF has modernised and upgraded its two Rehabilitation Centres with state-of-the-art equipment for Neuro-Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy. This was at a substantial expense and wouldn't have been possible without donations by philanthropists and our well-wishers.

IHIF can state with all confidence that these two Centres are now amongst the best in India. To top it all, these facilities will be available to the weaker sections of society who have suffered head and spinal injuries, as well as to those who suffer from cerebral palsy & autism at a very nominal and affordable charge. No poor person will ever be turned away from our Centres.

The new equipment includes machines for hand rehabilitation, gait training, a gait evaluation system, a functional electrical simulator, an ultrasound therapy unit, a balance system, a motorized tilt table, and an active passive cycle. But our efforts won't stop here. We shall continue updating our Centres as science evolves, so that our patients can benefit exponentially every passing year. With your continued support we know it is possible!

The Story of the New Road Transport and Safety Bill

Most of our Readers would be aware that after the death of Cabinet Minister Shri Gopinath Munde on 03 June 2014 due to a road accident in Delhi, the Central Government rightly put its fingers on the malaise affecting our mortality rate due to road accidents. It surmised that the existing laws in the Motor Vehicle Act 1988 were weak and ineffective, and to top it, there was very poor implementation by the States. To correct these shortcomings, a new Draft Road Transport & Safety Bill has been initiated. IHIF is a Stakeholder in the Ministry of Road Transport & Highway's Road Safety Committee, and has been actively advocating the introduction of this new Bill in Parliament and enacting it into a Law. Regrettably, in view of our Parliament being mostly non-functional, the Bill has not yet been introduced and we continue to struggle with our weak laws.

Meanwhile, the mortality rate due to head injuries on our roads has been rising rapidly. The reasons are fake driving licenses, poor implementation of existing laws, poor roads, faulty car designs, juveniles freely driving, small and nominal penalties, poor trauma care, and lack of ambulances and first responders. To top it, heavy overloaded vehicles go out of control on our highways as they are often driven by inexperienced drivers.

In 2015, India lost 1.46 lakh people which is roughly 10 lakh more than 2014. Those who suffered lifelong injuries also increased by nearly 2% to 5 lakh victims. There has been an increase of almost 55% in the last decade.

The only way to end this epidemic is to ensure the strengthening of the existing legislation so that it protects all classes of road users. A new all-encompassing law is the need of the hour followed by strong bipartisan implementation. It is high time that politics does not play with people's lives and all parties come to the table and push through this legislation.



Music Therapy at IHIF Rehab Centre

Ongoing Research has shown that Music helps activate various neurons in the brain. It is known to be therapeutic, provides a calming effect on the listener and gives a sense of enjoyment to those who are challenged and disabled.

Research has also allowed us to understand that music has the ability to affect centres in the brain that lie idle due to accidents or strokes. It also allows us to understand the benefits that music gives to the human mind and body, especially in neuro-rehabilitation through multiple neural pathways. To take advantage of this form of therapy, IHIF has used the services of "The Music Therapy Trust" to regularly provide lessons to patients and victims of Brain Trauma at the IHIF Rehab Centre in the Delhi Commonwealth Women's Association (DCWA) Campus. Our patients are being exposed to Music Therapy twice a week. As of now, it is too early to state what the results and benefits are. We shall share a substantial outcome report with you in about six months. However, case reports of sessions conducted by our music therapy team in the past show a definitive upward and improving trend in the memory and cognitive functions of some of the victims.



In conclusion, our work over the past six months has not only been demanding but also has been fruitful. With so much more to do, more children to reach out to, more patients to rehabilitate, more personnel to train, and more objectives to achieve, we eagerly look forward to the latter half of 2016. Our work is ongoing, and with you, our well-wishers by our side, we hope to achieve big things.

You can join us in bringing about a change for the better by volunteering with us. If you don't have the time to volunteer, you can support us by donating to our cause. Visit our website if you wish to donate online. With your support we can do so much more.



BE SAFE..TRAVEL SAFE..SAFETY SAVES!!

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