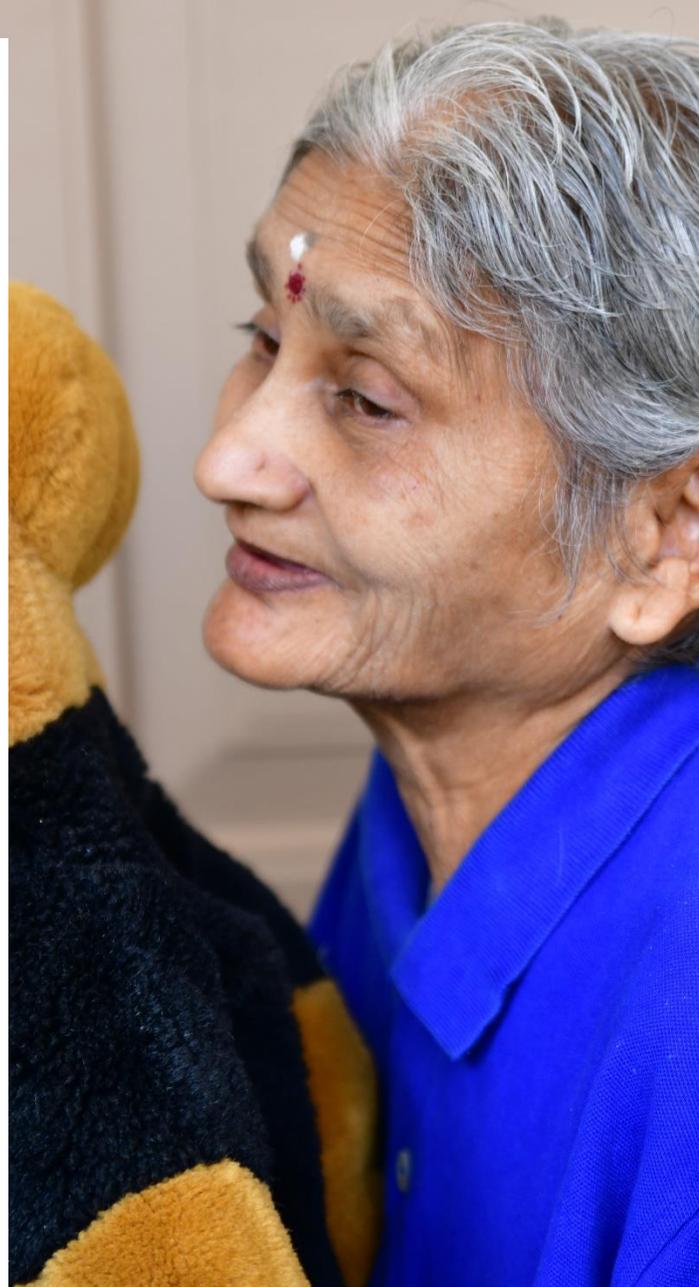


Impact of NMT during the times of COVID-19

CARING FOR ELDERS AND
THOSE WITH DEMENTIA



NIGHTINGALES MEDICAL TRUST



Impact of NMT during the times of COVID-19

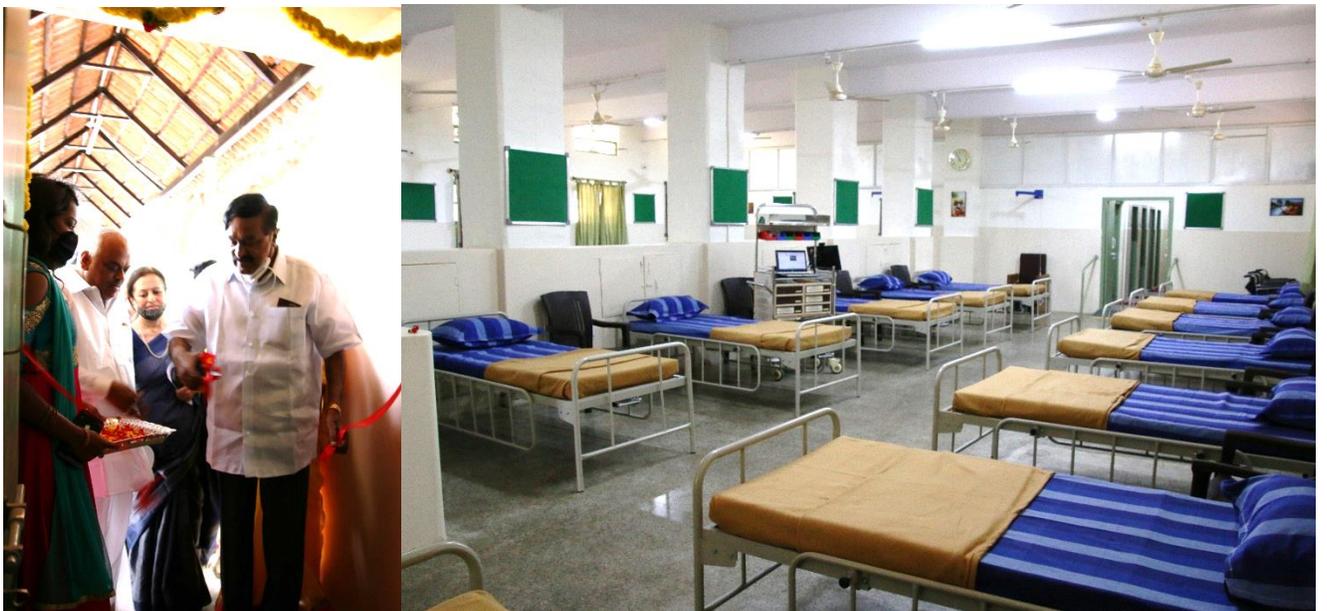
As the whole world is reeling under the pandemic, Nightingales Medical Trust, an NGO working for elders and those with dementia, has helped hundreds of needy elders throughout these 5 months (March to July 2020). With various need-based projects established across Bangalore, NMT has been pivotal in caring for the elderly since 1998.

With the onset of COVID-19, elders have been most affected since they are highly susceptible to the infection and have been advised not to come out of their homes.

NMT has 3 **Residential Dementia Care** facilities in Bangalore and Kolar. Across the world, long-term care facilities have reported high number of Covid deaths. With timely safety precautionary measures, detailed protocols, changes in infrastructure and commitment of staff, NMT has been successfully caring for 144 elders with dementia.



Despite the challenges during the pandemic, NMT expanded the cost-effective, tele-medicine enabled **Dementia Care Facility in Kolar** and added 24 beds.





NMT also runs **Sandhya Suraksha**, a destitute home for elderly women in Bangalore. Presently, 54 homeless elderly women are being cared for at the facility in a safe and secure environment. With lockdowns in place and nowhere to go, homeless elderly women were severely affected during this pandemic. The

team at Sandhya Suraksha, rescued 10 such elders from the streets and rehabilitated them. As the residents needed more medical care services and to avoid admitting those who are highly susceptible to the infection to hospitals, NMT has made available the services of a doctor and a senior psychiatrist at Sandhya Suraksha.

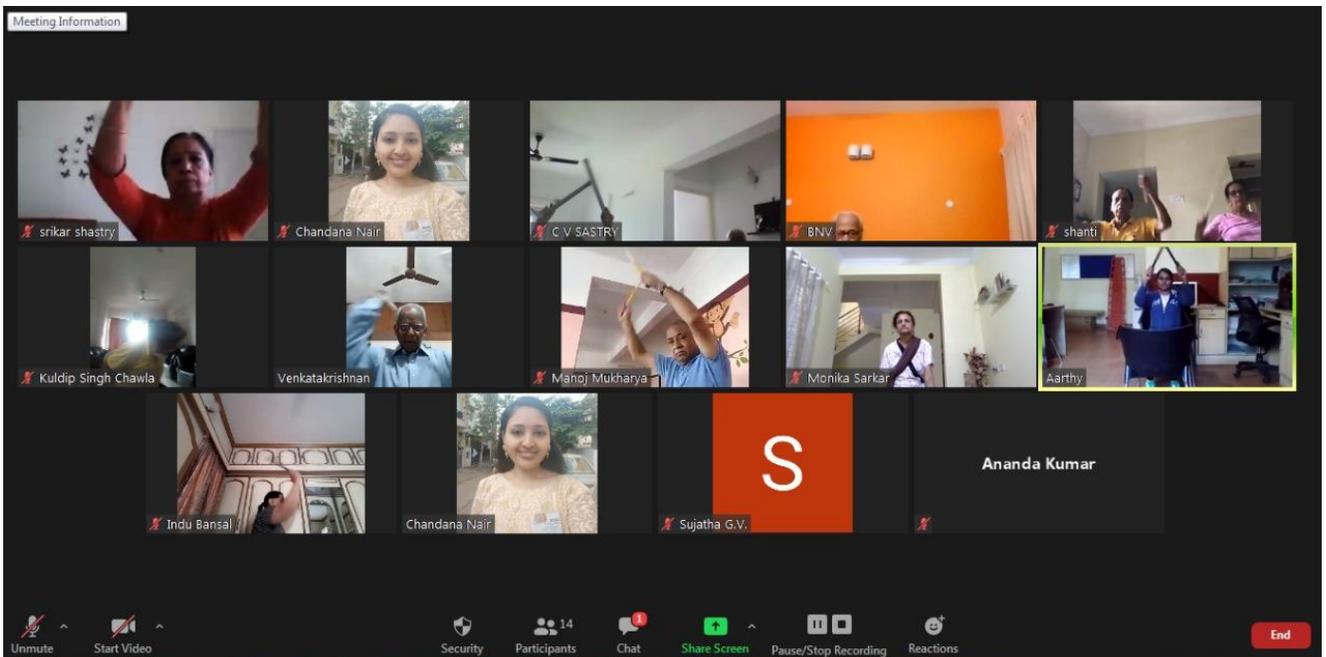
Gathering of people, especially those over the age of 65, is prohibited to safeguard elders from infection. This affected the different day care services of NMT. Those most affected were the underprivileged elders who looked forward to meeting as a group, making paper bags, enjoying nutritious meals and socializing with other elders and volunteers. To ensure that these elders continue to be engaged, we initiated **Mobile Outreach Programs** to support marginalized elders in city slums. 167 elders are being benefited through this program regularly. They are provided with nutritional supplements, hygiene products and medicines at their doorsteps. They are also provided with raw materials to make paper bags at home so that they can earn a small income.

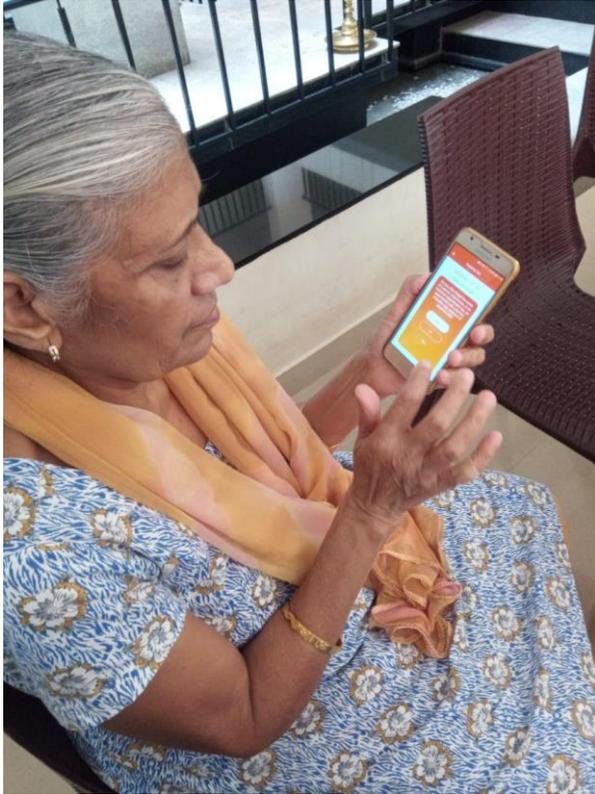


To treat non-Covid related ailments of marginalized elders, a **Free Geriatric Clinic** was started at the premises of Sandhya Kirana.



For other day care services - Active Ageing and Dementia care, there has been a shift to digital platforms. **Online Active Ageing Sessions** have a mix of physical exercises and activities to sharpen the cognitive abilities of elders, which have been well received by them. 70 elders are participating in the online activities and 16 elders with dementia are being benefited through **Personalized Online Dementia Care Support**.





The **DemKonnnect App** was developed to offer support and guidance to families of those with dementia. The App also enables online memory screening and has various engaging brain games. With the chat option, one-to-one online support and guidance is provided to enable families to engage their loved ones with cognitive activities and also assist them in managing crisis situations. 600 families have downloaded the App so far.

The **Mobile Active Ageing** program was restarted in July in a small way and is picking momentum. 7 old age homes are covered under this program benefiting 140 elders.

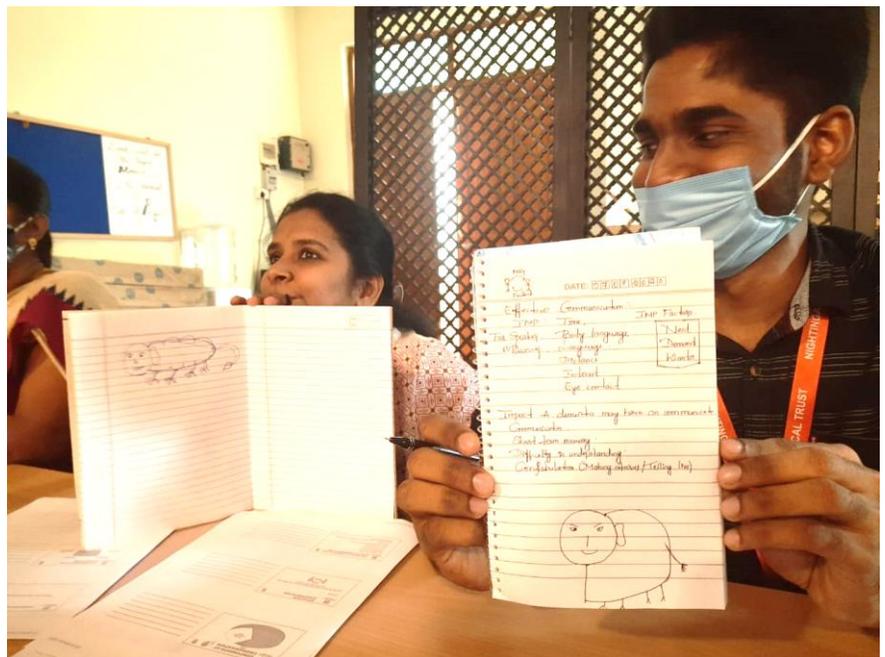
Through this unique program we organize social, physical and cognitive activities to improve the quality of living of elders in old age homes.



NMT's **Elders Helpline**, in association with Bangalore City Police has helped 983 elders in distress during the past 5 months. With the various challenges due to the restrictions in place, Elders Helpline initiated more need-based services such as delivery of essentials and medicines, counselling for emotionally disturbed elders, medical guidance and assistance for getting pension. To enable elders and the public to know more about the services of Elders Helpline and to file complaints online, a new website - www.stopelderabuse.in - was launched on 15th of June (World Elder Abuse Awareness Day) by the Bangalore City Police Commissioner.



Along with outreach, various training and awareness activities have also been conducted through online and offline modes. 75 youngsters became **Dementia Friends** by attending online training sessions and 15 persons were trained in **Dementia Care Skills**.



Volunteers have always been an integral part of Nightingales Medical Trust. We have mobilized over 50 active individual volunteers and a handful of corporate volunteering teams for our current needs. Eight active volunteers ranging from students to professionals and homemakers assisted with fun games for sessions in our virtual Active Ageing Programs. A few volunteers have been supporting us to teach basic smartphones to seniors virtually. We also got a few promotional videos about our various services made through these groups. They helped us in poster making, newspaper collections for our outreach programs and hosting Dementia Friends sessions as a part of fighting stigma and creating awareness about Dementia. They will still continue to support us in various other needs.

New Projects: Realigning our services with the COVID-19 situation, we have planned to initiate some projects. They are:

1. 24 bed destitute home for elderly men
2. Public education through Webinars on dementia and age care
3. Training old age homes on how to prevent and manage COVID-19.
4. Digital literacy programs for elders
5. Online dementia care skills program for medical and nursing students
6. Development of online teaching aids and software to ensure high quality remote training and support
7. Online job fair for senior citizen

With the present scenario, it is clear that the virus will continue to affect cities across India for a longer time. Elders will remain to be highly susceptible. Until now, NMT has identified and addressed different problems faced by elders during this pandemic and has extended all possible support to elders in need. Despite the various challenges the pandemic has been posing, NMT is keen on turning these challenges into opportunities and continue to provide support to many more elders. It is at a time like this that we at NMT feel that we need to be proactive and not just work to sustain our existing projects. NMT will continue to strive to provide all necessary care & support to elders and empower them during a pandemic such as this.