

Saranam India: June 2026



Enabling Access to Palliative and End of Life Care in Public Health Spaces

EXPANDING PATHWAYS OF CARE

June 2026 has been a month of steady expansion, deeper integration, and meaningful progress for Saranam as our work continues to take stronger root within public health spaces.

A major marker of this continued momentum has been the start of our **OPD operations at KC General Hospital**, along with the **operationalisation of our home-care unit** there. Building on the partnership inaugurated earlier, this signals an important movement from institution-building to service delivery — from vision to daily practice.

Equally significant has been the way collaborative **clinical pathways are beginning to take shape at KC General**. Relationships have now been established with **key departments including ART, General Medicine, and Cardiology**, alongside the development of referral protocols and trigger checklists. These are important structural steps, because they help ensure that palliative care is not introduced too late or too selectively, but recognized early as an essential layer of support within routine care systems.

This month has also marked an important step in widening the reach of our mission through a new MoU with the **Organization of Rare Diseases India (ORDI)**. This partnership opens an important avenue for enabling access to palliative and end-of-life care for people living with rare diseases, a community whose needs are often profound, complex, and insufficiently addressed within conventional care frameworks..

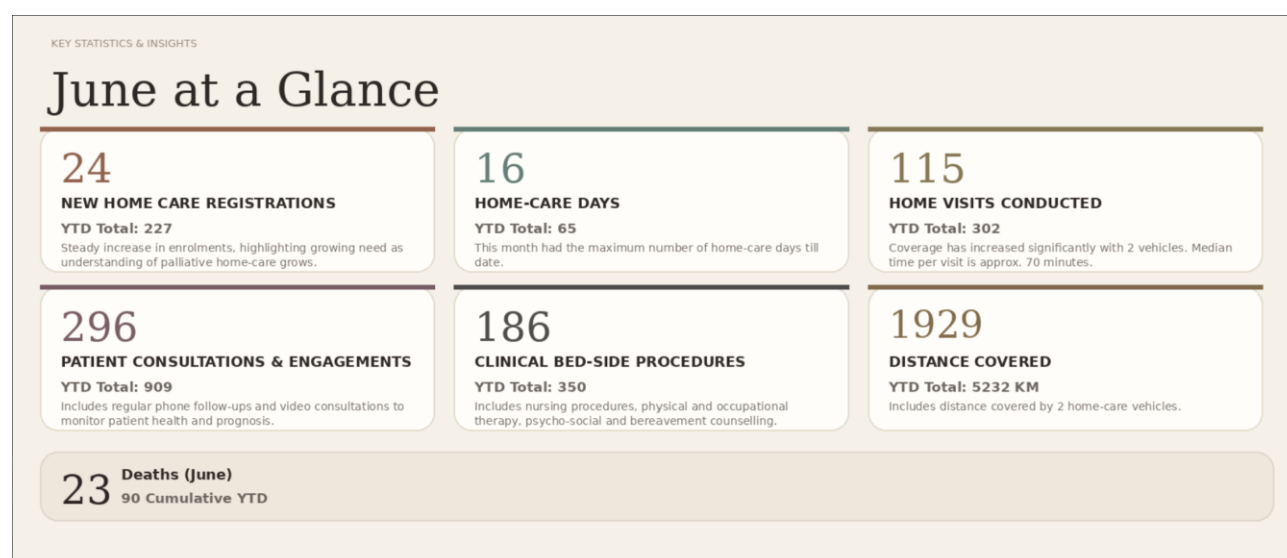
We have made a decision to include an **Acute Care Response Team at Kidwai Memorial** to respond to palliative care emergencies. This is a significant advancement in strengthening responsiveness within our care model, particularly for moments that demand urgent symptom relief, rapid assessment, and timely clinical intervention.

Alongside these developments in service delivery, June has also reflected the breadth of Saranam’s engagement across training, public participation, and community dialogue. Saranam was proud **to partner in the National Cancer Survivors Run** organized by Kidwai.

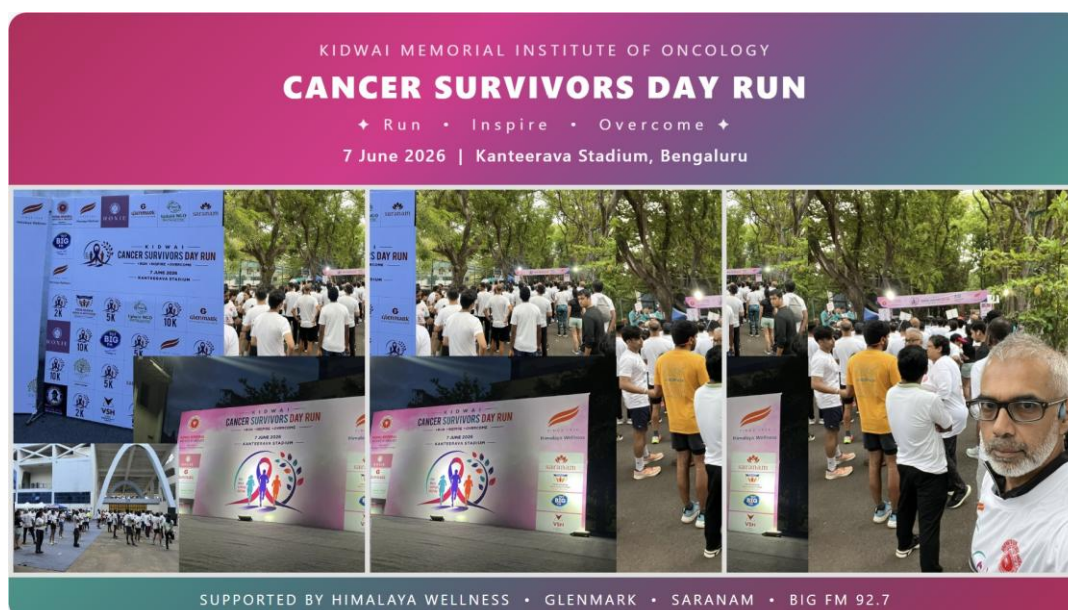
Our team also conducted a **full-fledged training on lymphedema management in cancer patients**, strengthening clinical knowledge and practical capacity in an area that has direct implications for quality of life and supportive care. We also jointly conducted an **academic session in partnership with the Dept. of Palliative Medicine** to develop a broader and deeper understanding of palliative home care within the two teams.

Our commitment to building a more informed and compassionate public culture around illness, mortality, and care also continued through our Death Literacy portfolio of programs. This month’s gathering, ***In-Transit: Conversations on Life, Loss, Grief and What Matters***, created another important space for reflection, dialogue, and shared humanity.

Key Statistics and Insights



Saranam's Team: Scenes from the Ground



Training on Lymphedema Management in Cancer Patients

Hands-on clinical demonstration and collaborative learning session



Ready for PowerPoint • 1920 × 1080 px

Every other Saturday our team comes together for a **bi-monthly internal capacity building session**. This Saturday it was focused on **Lymphedema Management in Cancer Patients** — a topic that sits at the intersection of oncology, rehabilitation, and quality of life.

Lymphedema is one of the most underrecognized and undertreated consequences of cancer and its treatment. Persistent swelling, discomfort, and reduced mobility can significantly affect a patient's dignity and day-to-day functioning — especially in the context of advanced illness. Getting this right matters.

www.saranamindia.org | A Sanctuary of Healing

saranam (शरणम्) – an initiative of The Sheltr Foundation, is a Sec 8, not-for-profit philanthropic institution.

Anish Ramachandran | Dr Tristha Ramamurthy | Vinita Kurup

Strengthening Death Literacy

Conversations about death, dying and end-of-life care are not a niche interest; they are essential public conversations that need engaging, supportive platforms where people can ask questions, share stories and plan with compassion.

And, when we don't talk about dying, the people who pay the highest price are often families sitting at the bedside of someone they love. If we accept that death is both universal and deeply personal, then we also have to accept that our current patchwork of information, whispered advice and crisis-driven care is not enough.

In a world that often pretends death is distant or optional, creating such spaces is an urgent act of system change.

In June – we were excited to conduct our third session in our series on Death Literacy. This was titled 'In Transit – Conversations about Grief, Loss, Life and What Matters'. It was facilitated by Dr Shikha Soni, a clinical psychologist, Dr Vanshika Gupta, a Nuclear Medicine physician, and Varalakshmi, a psycho-oncologist and palliative care counsellor.



There was authenticity in the room. There was rawness. There was reflection and regret. There were tears — and there was laughter — sometimes within the same breath. People shared things they rarely get to say out loud. About the people they've lost. About what they're afraid of. About what actually matters when you strip everything else away.

That's what Death Literacy looks like in practice. Not a lecture. Not a pamphlet. A room where real people talk about real things — and feel less alone for having done it.

Before the evening ended, people were already asking: *what's the next one about?*

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO COLLABORATE WITH THE ORGANIZATION FOR RARE DISEASES INDIA [ORDI]



Mr Prasanna Shirol, Founder and Executive Director, ORDI, with Anish Ramachandran, co-Founder and CEO (Hon.), Saranam India

Memorandum of Understanding between Saranam India and Organization for Rare Diseases India [ORDI]

Saranam India and Organization For Rare Diseases India (ORDI) signed an MoU to collaborate effectively to enable early identification, access, and integration of palliative care for patients with rare diseases in the Greater Bangalore area.

ORDI has been at the forefront of the effort to represent the collective voice of all patients with rare diseases in India, and its vision is to serve as the strong united voice for all rare diseases in India, to reduce inequalities and ensure that people living with rare diseases have access to the same resources as any other population.

Rare diseases in India are a major public health and equity challenge because they are often underdiagnosed, misdiagnosed, and detected late, while effective treatment is limited and usually very expensive.

This creates serious medical implications, including progression of disease, disability, avoidable complications, and poorer outcomes because treatment often starts too late.

Enabling access to palliative care for patients with rare diseases is essential because palliative care addresses suffering, improves quality of life, and supports complex symptom management when curative options are limited or unavailable. Integrating palliative care into rare-disease pathways also eases the financial and emotional burden on families by focusing on symptom relief, continuity of care, and realistic care planning, which can prevent futile or overly aggressive interventions.

CASE DIARIES: A STORY FROM THE FIELD



Jeena Isi Ka Naam Hai

The Woman Who Needed No One, Yet Prayed for Everyone

Chaalamma – meaning “enough” in Telugu

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A Life Fully Managed, Alone

In her sixties, living with carcinoma of the tongue, Chaalamma cooked, cleaned, managed her medications, and travelled to appointments entirely on her own – without depending on nearby family.



Dignity Through Work

She left for a factory job at 9 a.m. and returned by 6 p.m., choosing work that required little conversation – a job she spoke of with pride, not burden.



Loss Held With Faith

Having lost her mother, father, six brothers, a sister, and a marriage within months of it beginning, she honoured every loved one with photographs, flowers, and nightly prayer.



Compassion Beyond Her Own Pain

Even while carrying cancer and grief, she worried about the visiting team's safety in the rain, and prayed daily for other suffering patients she met at the hospital.

THE MOMENT THAT STAYED

"It's going to rain. Go carefully. Do you have an umbrella?"

"Oh God, if possible, relieve their suffering; otherwise, give them the strength and confidence to bear their pain, like you have given to me."

– Chaalamma's daily prayer for other patients

"Jeena Isi Ka Naam Hai"

This is what it means to truly live.

Saranam India · The Sheltr Foundation

Creating access to palliative and end-of-life care in public health settings, in partnership with the Department of Palliative Medicine, Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology, Bengaluru.

Names have been changed to protect privacy.

Read the full story at: <https://tinyurl.com/ku6keuu>

A SARANAM NEWSLETTER FEATURE:

WHY NOTIONS OF FAIR COMPENSATION NEED TO BE REIMAGINED IN THE SOCIAL SECTOR

Dignity Is Not A Discount

The price of presence, and the value of care that holds families through grief, strain, and uncertainty.



01 PRESENCE HAS VALUE

In care work, continuity is not a luxury. Familiar faces, steady routines, and trust built over time become part of the intervention itself.

02 COMPENSATION IS CULTURE

How an organization rewards people reveals what it truly believes about their labour, endurance, and dignity in demanding settings.

03 CARE IS THE WORK

Emotional steadiness, patience, and relational depth are not soft extras. They are central to palliative and end-of-life care.

“Anything less is not frugality. It is hypocrisy.”

A newsletter feature on why fair compensation, continuity, and presence matter in social-sector care teams.

Read the full essay at: <https://tinyurl.com/3bb6rty7>

We are deeply grateful for your continued support and commitment to this vital program. Many of you have reached out, expressed your support, your solidarity and of course, your generosity allows us to continue in our journey of ensuring that access to Palliative and End of Life Care is a fundamental human right.

To donate – please go to: <https://www.saranamindia.org/donation>