

# Editorial

A "Person with Disability" is defined as someone with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment that interacts with various barriers, hindering full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. The term Divyangjan, meaning "those with divine abilities," has been promoted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to replace "Persons with Disability," emphasizing respect and inclusivity.

Sudha Chandran, a renowned Indian classical dancer, has said, "Disability is a state of mind." This sentiment resonates strongly with the achievements of Indian athletes at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, where India had its most successful performance ever, securing 29 medals: 7 gold, 9 silver, and 13 bronze. These victories exemplify the potential of individuals with disabilities when barriers are removed.

India is home to approximately 2.7 crore people with disabilities. However, much of the country's infrastructure remains inaccessible, and systematic barriers persist. Assistive technologies have been instrumental in empowering individuals with disabilities by improving their functional capabilities, yet their availability and adoption remain limited.

Employment opportunities for persons with disabilities are scarce, with the workforce participation rate at just 36%. For women with disabilities, the figure is an even lower 23%. Educational institutions often lack resources like Braille materials, sign language interpreters, and accessible digital technologies, further limiting opportunities for empowerment. Public spaces and transportation systems are frequently inaccessible, compounding the challenges.

The elderly in India also face significant issues, including social isolation, depression, financial insecurity, and inadequate access to healthcare. For older adults with disabilities, these problems multiply, creating a profound need for targeted support.

Despite efforts by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment—through schemes like the Divyangjan Swavalamban Yojana and Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme—many challenges remain. Social stigma, inaccessible healthcare, and inadequate implementation of policies continue to hinder progress.

Amid these challenges, organizations like Maya CARE are leading the way by championing the cause of persons with disabilities. Maya CARE provides free assistance services, fostering dignity and inclusion. The organization stands out for its unique leadership structure, with individuals with disabilities leading from the front. Approximately 60% of its leadership team comprises women with disabilities, who not only contribute to operations but also inspire others by breaking stereotypes.

Maya CARE's initiatives, such as Project Bindu, offer skill development and employment opportunities to persons with disabilities. The organization bridges gaps by employing persons with disabilities to support the elderly, creating a win-win scenario for both groups. Maya CARE's dedicated front-end volunteers serve as angels, providing consistent and sincere assistance to the elderly. Their devotion is instrumental in creating paid work opportunities for Bindu team members.

The stories of individuals associated with Maya CARE are a testament to the transformative power of empowerment. Abhijit Mali, a national wrestling champion turned paraplegic, now leads Maya CARE's operations in Maharashtra, driving its expansion and impact. Similarly, Sowmya, a visually impaired Project Coordinator, oversees multiple projects with remarkable efficiency and has been recognized with prestigious awards for her contributions. Pritam Das, a wheelchair user, ensures the smooth functioning of projects while inspiring those around him.

While India has made significant strides in creating a more inclusive society, much remains to be done. Greater collaboration between the government, nonprofit organisations like Maya CARE, and the private sector is crucial. Investing in assistive technologies, improving accessibility, and challenging societal biases can create an equitable society for all.

Maya CARE serves as a beacon of hope, proving that persons with disabilities are not merely beneficiaries of support but are capable leaders, changemakers, and contributors to society. As we step into the new year, Maya CARE wishes its donors, well-wishers, Bindu staff, and volunteers a very happy and prosperous New Year. With sustained efforts, a future of true inclusivity and empowerment can be achieved.

# Feedback From Beneficiaries

1. Dr. Yuvraj Tyagi, 68, Milton Keynes UK, +44 7873804607.

I am associated with Maya CARE for last 2 years. I have found that the Maya CARE is an organisation which is headed by Mr. Abhay Joshi ji who is a great personality, and the more dedicated volunteers like Kumar Dumki, Sunil Kumar, Sujata Joshi are hard working punctual and positively sensitive towards the needy people, Maya volunteers are themselves, very kind and understand the need of their clients, I would say, I am honoured to be a part of this great organisation, I had been associated with Mr Ayush Garg and Sowmya etc and all of them are wonderful people and have a great passion to help others. I wish this great organisation, Maya Care all the best and good luck.

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2. Kashmaya Mahajan, 60, Balaju in Kathmandu, +977 9803245898.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Maya CARE for their invaluable assistance. Mr. Ashok Sharma, a volunteer from Maya CARE, kindly accompanied me to my hospital appointment in Balaju and provided much-needed support throughout the visit. Their dedication and care made a significant difference, and I am truly thankful for their help.

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3. Alka Ketkar, 80, Kothrud, Pune, +91 9820240798.

I am deeply grateful to Vinita Tai Mahajan for her unwavering support during the challenging health journey of my mother. Her punctuality, thoroughness, and foresight in managing hospital visits and paperwork have been a great comfort. Not only does she provide physical assistance, but her friendly and reassuring demeanor has also uplifted my mother's spirits. I am truly thankful to Vinita Tai and MayaCARE for their selfless, compassionate care. Your efforts are a testament to the incredible service you're doing for others, and I am proud to be associated with such a wonderful organization.

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4. Maitreyee Chowdhary, 70, Delhi, +91 9899971505.

I had an important hospital appointment, but I was struggling to manage the journey on my own. That's when I reached out to Maya CARE, and they arranged a wonderful volunteer to accompany me. This kind volunteer was incredibly helpful, kind, and supportive throughout the entire process. I am truly grateful to Maya CARE for providing such a dedicated companion during this time. Thank you, Maya CARE, for your exceptional service.

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5. Ram Narayan Gupta, 78, Jabalpur +91 9993913314.

I am 78 years old, and the volunteers from Maya CARE Foundation assisted me in attending a health checkup camp. I'm extremely grateful for their help, which made the whole experience much easier for me. Thank you to Maya CARE for their continued support and for making such services available to those in need.

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6. Woodbury Care Home, Milton Keynes, UK, +44 1189111224.

I am Merin, Manager of this care home. We were all truly delighted by the dance performance by volunteer Vishaka Joshi - it was absolutely fantastic. The appreciation from the audience, along with their heartfelt applause and kind words, was a reflection of the incredible talent you shared with us. It was well-deserved, and the energy you brought to the event made it unforgettable. Thank you for graciously visiting our home and delivering such a memorable experience. We are deeply grateful for the joy you brought to us all.

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7. Jeevan Sandhya Oldage Home, Ahmedabad, +91 9427956267

I am Ms. Dimple, the manager of Jeevan Sandhya Oldage Home in Ahmedabad. One memorable day, we had the pleasure of celebrating the Kite Festival with our elderly residents. It was a day filled with joy and laughter. We were joined by the wonderful volunteers from Maya Care, whose thoughtful activities truly uplifted the spirits of our seniors. Their efforts made the day even more special, and we are deeply grateful to Maya Care and all the volunteers for organizing this beautiful event. Thank you for bringing so many smiles to our residents' faces!

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8. Jan Seva Old Age Home, Mumbai, +91 8291283934.

I am Mr. Sagar Sarkar, the manager of this nursing home. We had a truly special day when volunteers from Maya Care visited us. They organized engaging activities, including singing and games, which brought so much joy to our residents. It was a wonderful time for everyone, and we are immensely grateful to Maya Care and the volunteers for making this day unforgettable. Many thanks for your kindness and for brightening our hearts with your thoughtful presence.

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# Maya CARE Activities

Maya CARE, dedicated to supporting elderly care, has been actively conducting impactful events across various cities. Alongside its vibrant programs in India, Maya CARE's efforts extend to the UK, enriching lives through meaningful engagements. Here's a glimpse into the recent initiatives:

## India Highlights

### 1. Vadodara, Gujarat

- 2nd November: A vibrant Diwali celebration brought festive cheer to the elderly at Shri Jalaram Old Age Home, led by a dedicated volunteer.

### 2. West Medinipur, West Bengal

- 1st November: Diwali festivities brightened the lives of residents at Yogi Ujjwala Nanda Sevashram, supported by one enthusiastic volunteer.

### 3. Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh

- 10th November: A lively musical program was organized at Nirashrit Old Age Home, thanks to two volunteers.
- 17th November: A yoga session at Ma Narmada Old Age Home promoted wellness among the residents with the assistance of two volunteers.
- 24th November: A physiotherapy and health check-up camp at Nirashrit Old Age Home was supported by four volunteers.
- 21st December: On World Meditation Day, a serene meditation session engaged residents with the help of two volunteers.

### 4. Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

- 14th November: A soulful musical program brought joy to the residents of Apna Ghar Vridhashram, with three volunteers participating.

### 5. Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh

- 21st December: A peaceful meditation session was conducted at ITI Vridhashram on World Meditation Day, involving three volunteers.

### 6. Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh

- 26th November: A health check-up camp at Apna Ghar Vridhashram benefited residents, with the support of two volunteers.

### 7. Delhi

- 28th October: Diwali celebrations at Manav Sewa Old Age Home saw one volunteer spreading joy and light.

### 8. Ludhiana, Punjab

- 11th October: Navratri celebrations at Dungri Old Age Home created a festive atmosphere, led by one volunteer.

## UK Highlights

### 1. Christmas Festivities

- A spectacular 30-minute dance performance by Deepa and her students was held at MK Cote Care Home, spreading cheer during the holiday season. Deepa is a potential supporter of Maya CARE UK.

### 2. Bollywood Karaoke Night

Maya CARE CIC's Proton team hosted a Bollywood Karaoke fundraiser to support UK elderly operations. The famous singer Mr. Rajan Shegunshi and team led the entire program, and Over 150 supporters joined, making the event a grand success, with the dedicated efforts of volunteers.

## Special Announcements

- **2025 Calendar Launch:** Maya CARE is delighted to announce the launch of its 2025 calendar, dedicated to its volunteers, donors, and supporters, celebrating their invaluable contributions and welcoming a special year ahead.
- **Project Bindu Initiative:** A new initiative by Project Bindu offers free training programs for economically weaker sections to help them earn livelihoods in fields such as beauty parlors, tailoring, driving, and housekeeping. The program is operational across Bengaluru, Delhi, Pune, Mumbai, and Kolkata, with recent support from DoLight.

Maya CARE continues to bring smiles to the faces of the elderly, promoting well-being, inclusion, and empowerment through these heartwarming initiatives.

# PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a brain disorder that causes unintended or uncontrollable movements, such as shaking, stiffness, and difficulty with balance and coordination. The symptoms are caused due to the lack of Dopamine, a natural substance usually found in the brain. India is estimated to have the highest number of PD patients due to its large population and prevalence. It is estimated to affect 15-43 people in 1 Lakh of population. Symptoms usually begin gradually and worsen over time. As the disease progresses, people may have difficulty walking and talking. They may also have mental and behavioral changes, sleep problems, depression, memory difficulties, and fatigue.

**The symptoms** of Parkinson's and the rate of progression differ among individuals. Although most people with Parkinson's first develop the disease after age 60, about 5% to 10% experience onset before the age of 50. Early symptoms of this disease are subtle and occur gradually. For example, people may feel mild tremors or have difficulty getting out of a chair. They may notice that they speak too softly, or that their handwriting is slow and looks cramped or small. Friends or family members may be the first to notice changes in someone with early Parkinson's. They may see that the person's face lacks expression and animation, or that the person does not move an arm or leg normally. People with Parkinson's disease often develop a Parkinsonian gait that includes a tendency to lean forward; take small, quick steps; and reduce swinging their arms. They also may have trouble initiating or continuing movement.

Doctors usually diagnose the disease by taking a person's medical history and performing a neurological examination. Although there is no cure for Parkinson's disease, medicines, surgical treatment, and other therapies can often relieve some symptoms. Syndopa is a commonly used medicine, although it should be taken only after proper diagnosis and prescription by a doctor.

**Medicines** can help treat the symptoms of Parkinson's by:

- Increasing the level of dopamine in the brain.
- Having an effect on other brain chemicals, such as neurotransmitters, which transfer information between brain cells
- Helping control non-movement symptoms

**Other therapies** that may help manage Parkinson's symptoms include:

- Physical, occupational, and speech therapies, which may help with gait and voice disorders, tremors and rigidity, and decline in mental functions
- A healthy diet to support overall wellness
- Exercises to strengthen muscles and improve balance, flexibility, and coordination
- Massage therapy to reduce tension
- Yoga and tai chi to increase stretching and flexibility

While the progression of Parkinson's is usually slow, eventually a person's daily routines may be affected. Activities such as working, taking care of a home, and participating in social activities with friends may become challenging. Experiencing these changes can be difficult, but support groups can help people cope. These groups can provide information, advice, and connections to resources for those living with Parkinson's disease, their families, and caregivers.

Reference: Website: <https://www.nia.nih.gov>

Resources: <https://www.parkinsonssocietyindia.com>

Avanish Thanawala  
(Maya CARE Volunteer, Pune)

# Maya CARE Foundation: Awards and Recognition.

Maya CARE Foundation has been recognized nationally and internationally for its exceptional social impact on offering free services to the elderly and economically empowering Differently Abled Individuals:

**1. Service Excellence Award from Bombay Sea Coast (2022).**

Celebrated for delivering outstanding free social services to the elderly, enhancing their well-being.

**2. Metropolis Public Health Award (2022)**

Awarded for its impactful vaccination project, supporting vulnerable communities across India.

**3. She Inspires Recognition, UK (2023).**

Honored for empowering differently-abled individuals across India and the UK, showcasing impactful work internationally.

**4. Junoon Award from Goonj Institute (2023)**

Acknowledged for its exceptional leadership and efforts in implementing a successful national vaccination project.

**5. Great British Workplace Wellbeing Award, UK (2024)**

Recognized in the "Best Use of Tech" category for enabling differently-abled individuals to deliver free elderly assistance services using innovative technology.

**6. Doing Good for Bharat Award by CSR Box (2024)**

Recognized for empowering differently-abled individuals, driving societal change, and fostering inclusivity in India.

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## Success stories of placement:

Harish Kurmachalam, a B.Tech graduate from Hyderabad, Telangana, with 70% muscular dystrophy, found a path to success through Maya CARE Foundation. With their support, he received interview preparation training and a placement opportunity for an HR role. Their organized approach helped him confidently secure a job at Data Crew Education Pvt Ltd. Harish is deeply grateful to Maya CARE for their guidance and unwavering support.

After struggling to secure a job through campus placements and subsequent efforts, Rajnish Ramgopal Soni, a dedicated MBA graduate from Thane, Maharashtra, found hope through Maya CARE Foundation. Despite facing challenges due to a 50% locomotor disability, he leveraged the opportunities provided by Maya CARE to interview with three companies and successfully secured a position at Jio Finance. Rajnish credits Maya CARE's unwavering support for helping him achieve this milestone and is deeply grateful for their guidance.





1. Mumbai: Anuja Kadam provided companionship to Manisha Athalye.



2. Mumbai: Suman Kamble assisted Ashalata Kamble with medicines.



3. Solapur: Sita Bansode played carrom with residents of Aadhar Old Age Home.



4. Pune: Vinita Mahajan helped Jyoti Firke cast her vote.



5. Pune: Shubhangi Lohkare supported Usha Mordekar with bank-related work.



6. Kanpur: Ashish Saxena celebrated Christmas with residents of Brahma Kumaris Ashram.



7. Delhi: Pooja helped Rajbala Ji with medicines.



8. Kolkata: Paulomi Choudhary supported Bharati Deb with travel.



9. Howrah: Prasenjit Chakroborty reads the Gita to Ashok Chakroborty.



10. Coimbatore: Subhashini accompanied Manikandan to a hospital appointment.



11. A Bollywood karaoke event was held in Milton Keynes, UK, to raise funds for elderly empowerment and Project Proton.



12. Volunteer Sunil Kumar accompanied Mr. Thyagi in Milton Keynes to address his loneliness.



13. Supporter Deepa and her students performed a dance at MK Cote Care Home in Milton Keynes.



14. Volunteer Ashok Sharma assisted Kashmaya Mahajan with a doctor's appointment in Kathmandu, Nepal.



15. Bindu members Pritam (Power Team) and Ayush (Voice Team) proudly represented Maya CARE and received the Doing Good for Bharat Award.



16. Founder Abhay Joshi received the Best Tech Award at the Great British Workplace Wellbeing Awards in the UK for leveraging tech by project Bindu.





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# MAYA CARE FOUNDATION

Year : 3rd Issue : 1st January - March 2025

**MAYA CARE NATIONAL HELPLINE : 1800 572 1343**

Maya Care Operates in 72 cities of India as mentioned below

Nashik, Parbhani, Ahmednagar, Jalana, Jalgaon, Dhule, Wardha, Mumbai, Sangli, Yavatmal, Nagpur, Nandurbar, Pune, Satara, Amravati, Chandrapur, Solapur, Akola, Buldhana, Kolhapur, Aurangabad, Beed, Latur, Jalalpur, Ujjain, Bhopal, Chhatarpur, Gwalior, Rewa, Indore, Jhansi, Lucknow, Kanpur, Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Abohar, Surat, Vadodra, Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, Katchch, Coimbatore, Chennai, Pondicherry, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Panipat, Sonapat, Guwahati, Hallikandi, East Medinipur, West Medinipur, Kolkata, Bankura, North 24 pargana, Malda, Howrah, Delhi, Bhubaneswar, Angul, Sambhalpur, Dholpur, Udaipur, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Baran, Cochin, Thiruvananthapuram, Dehradun, Haridwar.

**FOR WHATSAPP**

9552510400/9552510411  
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Following free services offered to Sr. Citizens, which are entirely managed by Professionals who overcome disabilities :

1. Accompanying senior citizens for a walk within or around the premises of their residential area.
2. Accompanying senior citizen to visit doctor / hospital / bank work.
3. Seeing them off / receiving them at the railway station / bus station / airport.
4. Sitting with a patient during hospitalization / outside the ICU.
5. Reading newspaper, magazines / religious books to senior citizens.
6. To withdraw / deposit cash / cheques in Bank, Technical help for smartphone.

Note: Maya Care does not offer Nursing, Emergency Service or Financial Aid.

**Website - [www.mayacare.org](http://www.mayacare.org) | Email : [service@mayacare.org](mailto:service@mayacare.org)**



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