

Initiatives for elderly mental health care

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Economic and social development

Why in news?

NIMHANS launched two new initiatives, developed in collaboration with Dementia India Alliance (DIA) for elderly mental health care, which coincides with World Alzheimer's Day, observed on September 21.

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- It is a **new community-based outreach program** by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS).
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Objective** - The program delivers **specialized psychiatric services directly to the homes** of elderly citizens to **bridge the significant gap in geriatric mental health care**.
- **Door step care** - A dedicated team comprising psychiatrists, psychologists, and nurses who **will conduct home visits**, provide follow-up assessments, counselling, and assisted tele-psychiatry consultations.
- **Comprehensive support** - The home visits include follow-up assessments, counseling sessions, and tele-psychiatry consultations as needed.
- **Community involvement** - Trained volunteers are part of the initiative to help **raise awareness about geriatric mental health issues** and provide basic support within the community.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has decided to celebrate (2021-2030) as 'Healthy Aging'.

- **Funding** - The programme is funded through **philanthropic contributions of Rs. 1.2 crore each** from eminent psychiatrists, who were formerly with NIMHANS.

Post-diagnostic Dementia Care Centre

- Dementia care in India is largely left to families, with little structured support.
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Objective** - To provide **structured support to families after a dementia diagnosis**, a stage where most are left to cope alone.
- **Goal** - To address the **current gap in structured post-diagnostic dementia** support in India, thereby improving the quality of life for individuals with dementia and their caregivers.
- **Features** - It will offer counselling, care planning, caregiver training, and therapies such as cognitive stimulation, art, music, and culturally relevant interventions.
- **Financial support** - It will extend modest financial support to **economically weaker families** to ease caregiving costs, alongside linkages to welfare schemes such as pensions and disability certification.
- **Benefits** - It will directly **benefit over 3,000 families each year** and gradually evolve into a sustainable model through philanthropy, endowments, and public-private partnerships.

Quick Facts

World Alzheimer's Day

- It is observed ***annually on September 21st*** to raise global awareness about Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.
- **2025 Theme** - "Ask About Dementia, Ask About Alzheimer's".
- **Significance** - Highlights the importance of early diagnosis, compassionate care, and greater public understanding of these progressive neurological disorders.

Reference

[The Hindu | NIMHANS launched initiatives for elderly health care](#)