

Leadership Development in Pediatric Palliative Care- Champions of Compassion Reflections from the CPC Leadership Program Graduation Ceremony

On Wednesday, 11 February 2026, 21 health care professionals graduated from the Children's Palliative Care Leadership Program in Hyderabad, India. The fellows represented seven different countries in South and Southeast Asia — India, Nepal, Pakistan, Vietnam, Bhutan, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka.

Over the course of one year, the leadership fellows developed innovative projects to build capacity, educate other professionals, conduct innovative research, advocate with government officials, and design culturally appropriate toolkits to advance children's palliative care in their respective settings. Each fellow works with one or two mentors from a team of global faculty experts in children's palliative care. **As a result of the leadership projects, 1200 health care professionals have been trained, and 155,000 children and families are receiving enhanced care.**

During the graduation ceremony, the leadership fellows present not on their own projects, but on one of their colleagues' projects. In this, they are required to quickly brief another colleague on their projects in a brief but impactful manner. One of the most heartwarming impacts of the graduation ceremony is watching the leadership fellows champion one another's work.

The program truly models how leadership is not simply based on one's rigor of work, but one's ability to build relationships, grow, and communicate effectively. All of the fellows demonstrated their abilities to overcome resistance through remarkable resilience. Driving this was a compassionate focus on children needing palliative care and their families. Furthermore, each fellow created sustainability that transformed their projects from personal endeavors to organizational commitments in children's palliative care.

It was evident during the graduation ceremony for the Children's Palliative Care Leadership Program that each fellow grew immensely. Each leader has developed an entrepreneurial spirit that they are using to drive effective change in their communities. Throughout the day, each reflected on how they will carry forward these skills throughout their careers and continue to foster impact for vulnerable children and their families.

This incredible program would not be possible without the vision of Two Worlds Cancer Collaboration and the support of its partners — Pain Relief and Palliative Care Society, St. Jude Global Palliative Care Program, Canuck Place Children's Hospice, Stanford Medicine Palliative Care, Cipla Foundation, International Children's Palliative Care Network, Global Treehouse Foundation, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, and Project ECHO.



Raising awareness in the community about Palliative Care by Theatre Play

The theatre play, 'Treat with Care' organized by Pain Relief and Palliative Care Society in collaboration with First Drop Theatre and Cipla Foundation, aimed to create awareness on compassionate care and the principles of palliative care. The active involvement and dedication of the nursing students significantly contributed to the success and overall impact of the programme. 200 students from care college of physiotherapy and Kumudini Devi Nursing College and Koti Women's College have actively participated in this awareness program.



Magic show for patients and caregivers

A heartwarming **Magic Show** was conducted on 28th February at Kumudini Devi Hospice for patients and caregivers, creating moments of joy and laughter amidst their daily challenges. Organized in collaboration with Swapnika Rhea Foundation, the event aimed to provide emotional relief and a refreshing break from the physical and psychological exhaustion that often accompanies caregiving and serious illness. The magic performance brought smiles, surprise, and light-hearted interaction, allowing patients, caregivers, and staff to momentarily step away from stress and immerse themselves in a cheerful

atmosphere. Such initiatives play a meaningful role in holistic palliative care by nurturing emotional well-being alongside physical comfort.

Launch of the Standards for Paediatric Palliative Care in India: 14th February 2026

We are delighted to share the launch of the new Standards for Paediatric Palliative Care in India, released by the Indian Association Of Palliative Care (IAPC) — a significant step forward for children’s palliative care. This incredible undertaking reflects the strong commitment of collaborators and partners. We are proud that our Chief Executive, Julia Downing, served as an expert reviewer, and that Board Members Dr Gayatri Palat, Dr Spandana Rayala and Dr Michael McNeil played key roles in supporting the development of these standards. May this milestone inspire continued innovation, advocacy and commitment to the wellbeing of children and their families in India and around the world.

