



# AWMH TIMES



July24–September24

## **President's Foreword**



*Dear Friends,*

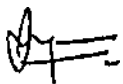
*It is with immense pride that I welcome you to the latest edition of **AWMH Times**, especially as we celebrate our **50<sup>th</sup> anniversary** this year. The journey of AWMH Maharashtra has been one of dedication, resilience, and unwavering commitment to supporting children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families. As we continue to grow, it is heartening to see how far we've come in expanding our services and reaching new milestones. A major highlight this quarter was the inauguration of our **6<sup>th</sup> Early Intervention Centre at JJ Hospital**. This prestigious collaboration is a testament to the tireless efforts of our team, the support from hospital officials, and the generosity of our benefactors. The new centre will provide crucial early intervention services, reinforcing our mission to give children the best start in life.*

*We also witnessed exciting developments across our **Recreation Activity Centre (RAC)** and **Sports programs**, with strong participation in carom and Table tennis tournaments. The passion and enthusiasm of our participants continue to inspire us.*

*Additionally, the **50<sup>th</sup> Annual General Body Meeting** was a moment of reflection and planning for the future. We are excited about the upcoming **Golden Jubilee events**, which aim to further strengthen our community and enhance the services we offer.*

*As we celebrate this momentous occasion, I extend my heartfelt thanks to all our stakeholders, donors, and supporters. Together, we will continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of children with IDD.*

*Warm regards*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Shrirang Bijur'.

*Cdr. Shrirang Bijur*

## 1) Early Intervention

**Early Intervention and Rehabilitation Program (EIRP)** is one of the core initiatives of AWMH Maharashtra, designed to provide specialized support to children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) during their early years (0-6 years). Early intervention is crucial because it can significantly improve a child's developmental outcomes by addressing cognitive, physical, emotional, and social challenges early on. EIRP services are family-centered, ensuring that both the child and their family receive the necessary support and guidance.



### **Key Features of EIRP:**

#### **A. Specialized Interventions:**

**a. Special Education:**  
Tailored educational programs are designed to meet each child's unique developmental needs, focusing on cognitive and skill development.

**b. Occupational Therapy:**

This helps children develop fine and gross motor skills, improving their ability to perform daily tasks and enhancing coordination.



c. **Speech Therapy:** Many children with developmental disabilities face challenges with communication, and speech therapy works to improve language skills and facilitate better communication.

d. **Parental Counseling:** Support is offered to parents to help them understand their child's condition, cope with stress, and manage their child's needs effectively.

e. **Home-bound Programs:** Parents are trained to continue the intervention at home, helping their child consistently apply the skills learned in therapy.



## B. **Developmental and Psychological Assessments:**

a. Children undergo regular developmental and psychological assessments to gauge progress, identify challenges, and customize their intervention plans. These assessments allow the team to monitor the child's growth and modify strategies accordingly.

## C. **Trans-Disciplinary Team Approach:**

- a. The program operates with a **trans-disciplinary team**, meaning specialists from different fields—such as special educators, therapists, and psychologists—work closely together. This ensures a comprehensive approach to each child's development, with coordinated efforts across disciplines.
- b. The team also involves the family, recognizing that parents play a crucial role in the child's growth. They are educated and empowered to support their child's development at home.



c. **Family-Centric and Child-Focused:** EIRP focuses not only on the child but also on the family as a whole. By involving the parents in the therapy process, the program ensures that interventions are more effective, as parents become active participants in their child’s development.



d. The interventions are designed to be developmentally appropriate and supportive, meeting the child at their current developmental stage and working towards clear, achievable milestones.

### Case Load

Centre	Registered	New Admission	Discontinued	Total Current	Irregular	Regular
Khetwadi	36	1	2	35	13	22
Ghatkoper	38	1	2	39	4	35
Mulund	40	4	5	39	1	38
Dombivili	62	3	4	61	6	55
Mankurd	43	4	2	45	6	39
JJ Hospital	Started on 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2024					

### Key Updates:

**Staff Meetings:** On 5th July 2024, a staff meeting was held at Khetwadi with Cdr. Bijur, followed by a session at Mulund on 2nd August 2024. These meetings focused on administrative tasks and knowledge-sharing on Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Topics included occupational therapy interventions and



lesson plans tailored for children with autism.

- **Guest Visit: On 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024**, Mr. Sonare, President of Ambedkar Center for Justice and Peace, visited Mankurd Centre, Observing therapy sessions and interacting with parents.
- **Staff Development:** Dr. Shital Fulzele has enrolled in Wipro's one-year Organization Development & Design fellowship, with the first workshop held in Bangalore from 11th to 13th July 2024.
- **Donor Interaction:** On 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024, AWMH held a quarterly meeting with Wipro representatives to discuss ongoing projects and future plans.

#### **Donor and Technology Collaborations:**

- **CABOT India Ltd:** Ms. Palak Shah, Head Legal & CSR, and team visited Mankurd Centre and spent some time with children and parents. She also discussed with staff about requirements of centre.
- **HSBC Project Audit:** On 19th July 2024, Deloitte, the project auditor for HSBC, held an online meeting with AWMH. HSBC's project supports early intervention and pre-schooling services for children with ID, and center visits are scheduled for September.
- **TCS Digitization Project:** TCS is developing a system to digitize AWMH's child records, streamlining progress tracking and documentation.



#### **Parent Engagement:**

On 27th July 2024, Cdr. Bijur hosted an online meeting with EI parents, discussing parental roles in child development and available government schemes like Niramaya. Although there were technical challenges, the session was well-attended, and more such meetings are planned for the future.

#### **Celebrations & NewJoiners:**

- **Festivities:** EI centers celebrated Independence Day and Raksha Bandhan with enthusiasm, involving parents and children in the activities.

- **New Joinees:** We heartily welcome our new team members who joined us in the last quarter. We wish them great success at their work and a joyful time job satisfaction
  - **Ms.Payal Soni–Speech Therapist(Part time)**
  - **Ms.Shubhangi Amale–Special Educator**
  - **MrTarun Jethwani–Speech Therapist(Part time)**
  - **Ms.Shrutika Palkar–Speech Therapist (Part time)**
  - **Ms.Chanchal Dhule–Special Educator**
  - **Ms.Mamta Rajbhar–Special Educator**
  - **Ms.Ashwani Ghode–Occupational Therapist**

We continue to enhance our services and engage with stakeholders to create a nurturing and inclusive environment for children with developmental challenges.

### **Opening of the Prestigious EI Centre at JJ Hospital – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

AWMH Maharashtra proudly inaugurated its 6th Early Intervention (EI) Centre at the prestigious **JJ Hospital** on **30th September 2024**, marking a significant milestone in our mission to expand services for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The journey to open this centre was the result of sustained efforts and dedication by the **EIRP Team** and office bearers, who navigated numerous challenges to bring this project to fruition.



The allocated space at JJ Hospital required substantial renovation to create a welcoming and functional environment for children, parents, and visitors. The room was completely revamped with new installations of lights, fans, and essential equipment, ensuring the space was ready for the centre's Operations by the inauguration day.



The inauguration ceremony was graced by **Dr.Pallavi Saple**, Dean of JJ

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Hospital, along with other hospital officials. The atmosphere at the newly renovated centre was festive, exuding positivity and hope for the future.

Dignitaries from AWMH, including **Dr. H.T. Dholakia, Mr. and Mrs. Modi,** and **Dr. Sunny Pariyaram,** as well as members of the Managing Committee, both past and present, were in attendance to witness this proud moment.

This new centre will provide a comprehensive range of **Early Intervention Services**, similar to our other EIRP centres, including:

- **Special Education:** Tailored programs to support cognitive and skill development.
- **Occupational Therapy:** Focusing on motor skills, coordination, and daily task independence.
- **Speech Therapy:** Enhancing communication abilities in children.
- **Parental Counseling:** Guiding parents through understanding and managing their child's needs.
- **Home-bound Programs:** Training parents to continue therapy at home.
- **Developmental and Psychological Assessments:** Monitoring each child's progress and needs.



The key challenges faced during the establishment of the **Early Intervention Centre at JJ Hospital** were:

- **Renovation and Infrastructure:** The room had to be transformed from scratch into a child-friendly, welcoming environment suitable for children with developmental disabilities.
- **Tight Deadlines:** Coordinating the work, ensuring the installation of necessary infrastructure, and maintaining the quality of the setup were critical tasks that had to be managed efficiently.
- **Collaboration with Hospital Staff:** Establishing clear communication and coordination was necessary to ensure smooth functioning of the centre, as it operates within the hospital's infrastructure.
- **Creating a Suitable Environment:** It was essential to make the centre accessible, welcoming, and equipped with the right tools and resources to support children with developmental disabilities and their families.



Dr Bela Verma, Head, Paediatrics dept. and Dr Chaya Valvi, Dy. Dean, were most cooperative and always eager to support AWMH to overcome the emerging challenges. It's with their support that such a good centre has come up, and will provide critical services to children with developing disabilities in the most welcoming manner.

With the opening of the JJ Hospital EI Centre, AWMH Maharashtra reaffirms its commitment to supporting the growth and development of children with IDD, ensuring they have the tools they need to thrive.

## **2) Recreation Activity Centre (RAC)**

### **July – September 2024**

On **6<sup>th</sup> July 2024**, nine Self-Advocates (four from RAC and five from SVRR) and three volunteers gathered at Villa Theresa School at 4:00 PM. The session began with prayers led by one of the self-advocates, followed by a Yoga and Laughter exercise. Enthusiastic participation marked the writing activity where members practiced writing personal information like their names, residential addresses, and guardian contact details with volunteer support. The highlight of the session was a sensory game called "*Touch and Tell*," where participants identified hidden objects by touch alone. The game was such a hit that two rounds were played, followed by snacks. The next session was planned with a focus on preparing a snack item.

Due to heavy rains, the sessions scheduled for **20th July 2024** and **3rd August 2024** was canceled, disappointing participants. The announcements were made through the RAC WhatsApp group to keep parents informed.

With a break in the monsoons, the session on **17th August 2024** saw thirteen attendees (including six from SVRR), along with five volunteers and two parents. The session featured a lively **Raksha Bandhan celebration**. After the customary prayers, members crafted their own Rakhis, decorating them with colored ribbons, beads, and stars. The girls tied Rakhis on the boys' wrists, and sweets were



exchanged, making for a joyful celebration. The event concluded with group photos and delicious snacks sponsored in memory of Nilesh by **Mrs Malatiben Dedhia** On **31st August 2024**, to avoid the Ganesh Chaturthi public holiday on 7<sup>th</sup> September, eight members (six from SVRR) and four volunteers attended the session focused on culinary skills. Members prepared healthy snacks using Monaco biscuits and salad. Under the guidance of Ninaben, they chopped vegetables, mixed dressings, and arranged the snack. The colorful and healthy snack was enjoyed by all, and the session concluded with discussions about the next meeting, tentatively set for **21st September 2024**.

### **3) Sports Update**

#### **July–September 2024**

Preparation for the **Dr. A.V. Mehta**

**Memorial Carom Tournament** was in full swing, with 218 entries received from 27 schools. This event, organized by V.D. Indian Society, was supported by The AWMH Maharashtra Sports team. Practice sessions continued at the Sports Recreation Centre, with five students from the weekend coaching program participating in the tournament.



The **15th Maharashtra State Table Tennis Tournament** preparation also began in earnest. Letters to book the Table Tennis Hall were sent on **29th July 2024**, and event circulars were emailed to schools on **5<sup>th</sup> August 2024**. Ability grouping tests were conducted at the Sports Recreation Centre in Malad(West) on **31st August, 1st September, and 21st September 2024**, with 193 students from 24 schools attending. For outstation students, an online ability test was held on **29<sup>th</sup> September 2024**, following a teacher briefing on setting up tables and camera angles. **Finals** will be held in Goregaon Sports club on 5<sup>th</sup> Oct 2024.

Students from the Sports Recreation Centre's weekend coaching program participated in the event, with some representing their schools and



others competing through the Centre. Notably, several students who previously participated in the Individual Skill Contest have progressed to compete in Singles this year. As part of the tradition, all participants will receive special T-shirts featuring the **AWMH 50th Anniversary** logo, sourced from M/s Tarun Sports, and medals inscribed

with both the AWMH 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the **Rotary Club of Bombay Royales** logos, procured from Ganesh Traders.

In parallel with the event preparation, Mrs. Meena Parekh and Mr. Ravi Bagdi were in discussions with **Mr. Prashant Surana**, President of Rotary Club of Mumbai Royales, for sponsorship of the tournament. We remain optimistic about securing their support.

#### 4) 50<sup>th</sup> Annual General Body Meeting

##### – Summary

The 50th Annual General Body Meeting of AWMH Maharashtra was held on **14th September 2024**, chaired by **Cdr. Shrirang Bijur, President**, with 45 members in attendance. The meeting began at 2:00 PM with a welcome address by the president who reflected on the achievements of AWMH over the past year and plans for the Golden Jubilee celebrations. He announced a significant contribution from **Mr. Praful and Mrs. Swarupa Modi** to cover the operating expenses for the new Early Intervention Centre at JJ Hospital, which is scheduled for inauguration in September. Mr. &

Mrs. Modi were honored by President for their continued support to AWMH Maharashtra.

Key points discussed during the meeting included:

- **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the 49th Annual General Meeting were approved unanimously.
- **Annual Report Presentation:** The 50th Annual Report for FY 2023-24 was presented, detailing the progress and activities across Early Intervention Centres (EIRP), Sports, and the Recreation Activity Centre (RAC). Dr. Shital Fulzele and Ms. Rashmi Tambe highlighted key accomplishments and success stories from the EIRP program, while **Mrs. Maltiben**



**Dedhia** provided insights into RAC activities, including homebound programs and sports sessions. **Mrs. Meena Parekh** shared updates on sports coaching and tournaments.

- **Audited Financial Statements:** The audited accounts for FY 2023-24 were presented and approved. The President explained the financial status, including income from donations and CSR grants, and future investment plans as suggested by **Mr. Praful Modi**.

- **Budget for FY2024-25:**The proposed budget of ₹1.104 crores, primarily covering salaries and operational expenses, was approved.

- **Auditor Appointment:** M/s Harshit Mehta & Co. was reappointed as auditors for FY 2024-25.

- **Golden Jubilee Plans:** Upcoming events were discussed, including the opening of the JJ Hospital Centre, Yoga by the Bay, Sponsorship of Maharashtra Athletics, and collaboration with Smt. Malini Kishore Sangavi Hospital for homeopathic treatment for children coming to our EIRP centres.



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