

## Smile Train India to boost cleft care ecosystem in India

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**Funded by Infosys Co-Founder K. Dinesh and his family, the Trust is extending support towards cleft surgeries, capacity development trainings, and equipment grants**



Smile Train India, a children's charity with a sustainable approach to a single, solvable problem: cleft lip and palate, announced a new partnership with Ashraya Hastha Trust, a charitable organization funded by Infosys Co-Founder K. Dinesh and his family.

The partnership with Ashraya Hastha Trust will boost the cleft care ecosystem in India by supporting 850 cleft surgeries, 3 capacity development trainings for Smile Train's local medical professionals, and vital safety and mobilization infrastructure at Smile Train India's partner hospitals.

Dinesh, Co-Founder of Infosys said, "We extend our support to Smile Train India for their commitment towards treating babies born with clefts. The greatest challenge today in our country is the accessibility and affordability of healthcare. A small step towards bridging this gap is supporting the lesser known cause and helping children who are the future of our country."

In India, it is estimated that more than 35,000 babies are born with a cleft lip and/or palate every year, and hundreds of thousands of children with untreated clefts live in isolation, but more importantly, have difficulty eating, breathing and speaking, as they cannot afford cleft treatment. Cleft surgery is safe and the transformation is immediate. The Trust will support free cleft surgery for 850 underprivileged children at Smile Train's local partner hospitals at Bengaluru, and underserved locations such as Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Furthermore, Divya Dinesh, Founder & CEO of Addvantis Enterprises LLP, shared her journey as a child born with a cleft and the challenges she faced. “Through this partnership, we are proud to bring forever smiles to many children in India. Cleft treatment not only helps a cleft patient lead a healthy life but also boosts their confidence and self-esteem to lead a more full and productive life,” said Divya.

Apart from surgeries, Ashraya Hastha Trust is supporting capacity building medical trainings and safety and mobilization equipment, enabling an environment for best in class cleft treatment at Smile Train’s local partner hospitals. Over a one year period, medical trainings will be conducted for surgeons, nurses and anesthetists in different parts of India. The Trust will support safety equipment such as pulse oximeters and mobilization equipment like vans to upgrade hospital safety infrastructure and build greater awareness about the treatment.

Mamta Carroll, Vice President & Regional Director for Asia at Smile Train expressed her gratitude towards K. Dinesh and his family and appreciated Divya Dinesh for her passion and interest in helping babies born with clefts.

“Safety and quality has always been a priority for Smile Train. The project will support cleft surgeries enabling underprivileged children born with clefts to live healthy and productive lives. The partnership with Ashraya Hastha Trust will help us strengthen our local cleft treatment infrastructure and reach children in remote locations who do not have access to cleft treatment,” Mamta added.

Smile Train's sustainable model provides training, funding and resources to empower local medical professionals to provide free cleft surgery and comprehensive cleft care in their own communities. Since 2000, Smile Train India has supported more than 550,000 free cleft surgeries across India, through a network of 160+ partner hospitals.