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Smile Train India announces new cleft care centre at NHI

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Free cleft lip and palate treatment available for patients all year round at the new cleft centre



Smile Train India, the children's cleft charity, announced its partnership with National Heart Institute to support free cleft lip and palate surgeries in Delhi - NCR. Free cleft treatment will be available to patients all year round at the new cleft centre at National Heart Institute. The cleft surgeries will be performed by renowned plastic surgeon, Dr. Karoon Agrawal, who has been associated with Smile Train since 2009.

Since 2000, Smile Train India has been actively involved in supporting cleft treatment for underprivileged children who are forced to live with untreated clefts due to poverty and ignorance. Smile Train India has supported more than 14,000 surgeries in New Delhi through various partner hospitals.

Talking about the partnership, Sheila Koyyana, Program Manager, Smile Train India, said "There are millions of children born with cleft lip & palate who need help, but can't receive timely care due to monetary constraints and lack of awareness about its treatment. Our 'Teach a man to fish' model has empowered 300+ medical professionals and 150+ hospitals across India with funding, training and resources to provide 100% free cleft treatment in their communities. This approach helps create long lasting, robust and sustainable impact in cleft care. We are very happy to partner with National Heart Institute and Dr. Karoon Agrawal to help children born with clefts in Delhi - NCR."

Dr. Karoon Agrawal, Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon, National Heart Institute said, "Hundreds of thousands of children continue to live with untreated clefts due to ignorance and poverty. We are happy to be associated with Smile Train India to support treatment to children born with cleft lip and palate, absolutely free of cost. Smile Train has been a game changer, creating awareness about the cause and providing comprehensive cleft care throughout the country."

In India, it is estimated that more than 35,000 babies are born with clefts every year. Hundreds of thousands of children with untreated clefts live in isolation, but more importantly, have difficulty eating, breathing and speaking, as their families cannot afford the life-transforming cleft treatment. Smile Train India's sustainable model focuses on training and empowering local medical professionals to provide 100% free cleft treatment in their own communities. Through this sustainable model, Smile Train India has supported more than 600,000 free cleft surgeries across India.