

What it means to be recognised as a Patient Advocate - in their own words

Manhar Kochhar



SEP 2019 PATIENT ADVOCATE

“From being just a CML patient to becoming CML Advocate of the month has been an honour. Reading about other volunteers in ‘Patient Advocate of the month’ series has not only motivated me but also pushed me to become an active volunteer. It has increased my confidence in many ways and since we (volunteers) are an integral part of FOM, it feels good to have a platform where we are recognised.”

Rishi Arora



APR 2019 PATIENT ADVOCATE

“Patient Advocate of the month is a humble and motivating initiative. It is a platform for recognition of each little thing done by volunteers and inspires each member of FOM community. I personally felt extremely happy on getting recognised.”

Sandeep Mahil



DEC 2018 PATIENT ADVOCATE

“To read about other advocates through ‘Patient Advocate of the month’ series gives you a feeling that you are not alone. A platform where one can learn from one another.”

Param Puthen



NOV 2018 PATIENT ADVOCATE

“Acknowledgement and recognition especially from peers is the greatest reward ... not that one wants any reward. What we do is blessing in itself.”

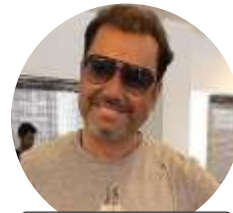
Rajiv Kumar



SEP 2018 PATIENT ADVOCATE

“Patient Advocate of the month is an important initiative. I believe that hard work and happiness are contagious in nature, so reading about nominated ‘Patient Advocate of the month’ actually encourages others to never lose hope, to stay happy and to keep treading on their paths of life. When I was nominated last September, my FOM family and I shared about it on various social media platforms through which many of my friends also got to know about the organization and its work.”

Pranay Ranjan



AUG 2018 PATIENT ADVOCATE

“FOM and The Max Foundation both have their volunteers in the centre of their strategy and approach, right next to patients and caregivers. Recognising volunteers for their efforts does not only appreciate the recognised volunteer but it motivates hundreds more to come forward and support the cause. I happen to be one of the privileged ones having been recognised too and I can tell, I felt very humbled and extremely honoured.”

Amma Speaks

Patient Advocate of the Month

‘Amma, after being referred to as a patient for all these years, I can’t tell you how happy and proud I am to be called a Patient Advocate. I am so proud of who I have become. Thank you for giving me this experience.’

Manhar Kochhar, our Patient Advocate of the Month for September.

It is more than two years now into our monthly acknowledgment of the efforts of the Friends of Max City Chapter Leaders from different cities ; efforts

towards creating awareness, promoting compliance , encouraging participation in our projects and supporting those under their watch on this journey of living with cancer in whatever manner possible. The objective was to recognise and showcase the amazing advocacy work by each one of them and also introduce these enthusiastic and inspiring patient leaders to one another and to peers across the cancer community.

When Manhar said this to me, about this whole experience having been responsible for making him into

someone he’s so proud to be, I realised that this was what it was all about. Always. This finding a New Normal and in that process rediscovering themselves.

This issue of our newsletter is devoted to all those in Friends of Max who have stepped up, be they patient or caregiver or a friend of FOM, to lead and shine by example and to serve by sharing their learnings.

And to those who will, each coming month continue to be featured, shining like the stars they are and lighting the way ahead for the others.

- Viji Venkatesh



JUN 2018 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Nagendran Nagarajan

"To know about any volunteer's achievements and contributions, encourages hundreds of others. It seeds in good faith and compassion. This helps in creating more such volunteers becoming torch bearers of hope."



JUL 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Dr. Nikhil Guhagarkar

"FOM is such a unique place which is started, managed and run by volunteers who are patients or caregivers. It is a matrix of huge network of people who selflessly work towards education, fund raising, support and help for fellow patients and this is purely out of love and willingness to extend a helping hand. 'Patient Advocate of the month' series is a beautiful way of recognizing the work of these dedicated people, who have run that extra mile to make a difference and enrich life of others. It instils a sense of motivation and a feeling of WOW to the person receiving the award. When I received the award, I felt gratitude towards all in FOM who made it possible. The support of whole network only makes the individual shine. I am very happy and proud to be part of this network."



APR 2018 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Neel Kankani

"I really appreciate this idea of giving an honour to core volunteers by choosing one for each month and sharing about their achievements and contributions towards CML and GIST community. With busy lives, it can be hard to find time to volunteer but the benefits of volunteering are enormous. It feels good to read about other volunteers, helps connecting with them. I am glad to be part of Friends of Max."



MAR 2018 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Prashant Kumar

"For any patient or caregiver, it's both exciting and humbling to be recognised. This thoughtfulness and generosity has empowered and encouraged us to do our best always."



FEB 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

J.P Tiwari

"This is a very good idea, through this we get to know people of different demographics as well as understand their thinking better. It also inspires other colleagues of FOM family, our peers who are hesitant to come forward or feel uncomfortable to come out of their shell and express themselves. Whenever we strive to motivate our peers, our motivation also increases."



DEC 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Sandhya Godey

"As a regular follower of FOM activity on social media and website, I have always looked forward to the 'Patient Advocate of the month' series, not only to see who gained that honour for their dedication as a volunteer but as a member of Max family, almost all situations seem familiar and hence it always inspires me and gives me hope. It is a great endeavour to share stories through this column and encourage all the readers to stay positive."



DEC 2016 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Suresh Pawar

"I was very excited when I was nominated for 'Patient Advocate of the month' in December 2016. It felt good to know that my work was appreciated and since then I have looked forward to reading about each advocate. This is a great platform of motivation."



SEP 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Pramod Agarwal

"Becoming 'Patient Advocate of the month' is a source of motivation. It has encouraged me to level up my commitment towards FOM activities, participate more and go beyond my routine duties."

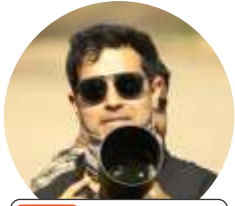


AUG 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Pramod George

"None of us are dedicated full time advocates. Advocacy by us is mostly giving back to society in our available time. When such a small giving gets recognised by way of being selected as the 'Patient Advocate of the month' in the FOM community, it's a morale booster for the individual. It also serves as a motivational tool by following other volunteers' footsteps."

Our Patient Advocates



AUG 2019 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Vicky Vatnani

Vicky is one of our most enthusiastic advocate and a pillar of Friend of Max's many activities in Hyderabad. He has been an inspiring leader providing amazing support and guidance to the City Chapter of Hyderabad and the FOM leadership as well as the Max team. He is passionate about wildlife and an avid photographer.



JUL 2019 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Rashmi Kishore

Rashmi is our indomitable GISTER from Mumbai who befriended her Cancer with courage and determination. She was diagnosed with GIST in 2004 but her life was jolted when it relapsed in 2009. Her physician Dr. Asha Kapadia introduced her to The Max Foundation and the magic bullet 'Glivec'. She is now a devoted FOM City Chapter Leader and a regular and tireless volunteer at our Support Group Meetings and all the Chai for Cancer Addas held in Mumbai.



JUN 2019 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Geeta & Jayant Duvedi

Geeta and Jayant Duvedi have been integral to the Pune Chapter of Friends of Max for well over a decade. A father-figure for the FOM Pune team, caregiver Jayant is equally at home playing guardian of the FOM Pune group as with paying studious attention to detail while translating Maximo and the Big C to reach a wider audience. Apart from Friends of Max activities which they are devoted to, both Jayant and Geeta are deeply

involved with their own school located on the plot of land that they own. The school which they founded in 1987 and caters to nearly 200 children.



MAY 2019 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Ravikumar P

Deeply involved in FOM's network in various cities across the country: FOM Kerala and FOM Dharwad, Ravikumar's dedication is apparent. He is equally at home with the poor and needy as with community leaders articulating and executing the Kerala Chapter's objectives. He walks the talk. Overcoming the shock of a CML diagnosis in 2001, he became a dedicated member of FOM from 2004.



MAR 2019 PATIENT ADVOCATE



MAR 2019 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Omprakash Agarwal & Rabindra Kumar Gouda

Two enterprising and dynamic individuals from Bhubaneswar whose paths were joined by CML and Friends of Max. Two kind hearted persons who have consistently upheld the FOM dictum: Together We Share And Learn. Omprakash is an entrepreneur in the Industrial Water Treatment sector and an active member of Rameshwar Temple Trust, XIMB Alumni Association and UCCI.

Rabindra is associated with Ashani Academy (for children), several national and international organisations and Government projects in Orissa.



FEB 2019 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Bharat Bhushan Vashisht

Bharat Bhushan Vashisht has the air of a person who knows his way around. A reassuring aura of equanimity surrounds his actions. A GIST case since 2004, he is based in Delhi and helped set up the FOM City Chapter (Delhi) and is a regular and steadfast supporter of Chai For Cancer events in Delhi. His enthusiasm for gardening has grown into a passion. He has an extensive Bonsai collection and is also a member of Indian Bonsai Association.



JAN 2019 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Sajeevan Parambath

Studiously devoted to his role as a Patient Advocate for nearly a decade and Secretary of Pratheeksha Organization for cancer patients, Kerala, patronised by Dr. N. K. Warrior and volunteers for a Palliative Centre in Calicut Sajeevan provides counselling to patients at MVR Hospital and is also the President of a local resident's association. A quiet soldier for Friends of Max he rallies other FOM members and reaches out to all CML patients.



OCT 2018 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Shashikant Keshav Jakhade

A Garware College (Commerce) graduate, SK is employed with Trade Ultra Ventures Pvt Ltd as General Manager. A natural leader he developed the Pune Friends of Max team into one of the most committed in the country. Actively throws himself into its patient-related activities and featured prominently in the FOM Leadership Meeting in Pune 2013 followed by annual Chai for Cancer Addas every year during the Ganesh festivals.



JUL 2018 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Rishi Ajatshatru

An Art of Living Teacher Rishi conducts workshops all over the country and is a very active FOM City Chapter Leader. An active participant in the sphere of politics his ability to galvanise others has seen him organise Patient Group Meetings and as many as four Chai for Cancer Addas in Ranchi. Rishi has conducted several worthwhile yoga sessions at All India Friends of Max Patient Group Meetings as well as meetings held in Ranchi.



MAY 2018 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Karthikeyan K

Born and brought up at Udumalaipet, a peaceful little town near Coimbatore KK is our CFC Champion from the region. Actively involved with the Rotary Club he runs a Food Bank for street dwellers along with his friends. KK is a constant and energetic presence in all nearby FOM Support group meetings be in Chennai or Bangalore .



JAN 2018 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Arindam Das

A lawyer by profession Arindam is an active FOM Volunteer during all Patient Group Meetings and Chai for Cancer fundraiser and advocacy Addas in his city. He is also activity involved with “Khelaghar” a charity home for nearly 250 poor children (food shelter clothing education extra-curricular activities) and “Manush Manusher Jonno” clothes-distribution programme for about 500 persons during Durga Puja.



OCT 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Ushakant Shah

For Ushakant Shah, coping with adversity and being devoted to cancer patients in need of support have gone hand in hand since 2003 – when a diagnosis of CML stunned the successful businessman. Tireless as a Trustee of Friends of Max, he has brought his wide experience to bear on the Trust's multi-faceted advocacy and fundraiser activities all over India. He also devotes considerable time to his NGO in Ahmedabad -

Karunakare - chiefly aimed at supporting poor cancer patients socially, emotionally and financially.



MAY 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Sanjeev Jha

Hailing from a modest town in Bokaro (Jharkhand) Sanjeev was 34 years old when diagnosed with CML. He never let this diagnosis get the better of him. More than a decade of coping with CML has made him even more dedicated to the cause of spreading the importance of advocacy and compliance among other cancer-patients. A tireless volunteer for Friends of Max, his message to others is to follow their physician’s advice, be strict about compliance and, above all, “to keep smiling”.



MAR 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Vikramaditya Agarwal

Vikramaditya wanted to forge a career as a Chartered Accountant. However because of CML, he changed course and decided to dedicate his attention to Health & Fitness and stress the importance of Nutrition in life. He has been associated with the global company Herbalife Nutrition as a Wellness Coach. His dream is to construct a charity hospital in the future where the poor and needy can avail of quality treatment and care.



FEB 2019 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Avtar Singh Plaha

Retired from Indira Gandhi Krishi Vishwavidyalaya as a Superintendent Engineer and a former Chhattisgarh Construction Head Avtar ji has been the nerve-centre of Friends of Max activities in Raipur . He is one of the founders of Chhattisgarh Sikh Officers Welfare Association which plans to focus on education and health for the needy, including free medicine and medical check-ups.



NOV 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Vir Krishan Bhat

Recognized by national level personalities, justices and journalists for his work on Kashmir Bachav Movement Vir ji is a regular and highly active Friends of Max volunteer who plays a vital role as advocate at every Max Foundation & Friends of Max event for patients and caregivers.



JUN 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Sangeetha Param

Sangeetha Param is a talented, many-faceted FOM volunteer, daughter and caregiver of Parameswaran - FOM Trustee and a CML advocate. Her association with FOM began when her father was diagnosed with CML in 2004 - She has grown from a young, innocent girl into a teenager and is now a strong, caring adult who has learnt to face and cope with the challenges in life as a CML caregiver. Articulating emotions

and learning from them and importantly passing on such experiences to others has been a key contribution as a FOM Volunteer. She has been a regular at all FOM Support Group Meetings exuding positivity and a “can-do” attitude.



APR 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Karan Vyas

His youth belies nerves of steel and a heart of gold. Fourteen years ago, in 2003, at the age of nine, he was told he had CML. Fresh-faced Karan Vyas has not only been living with CML for over a decade but has graduated as a Mechanical Engineer and made incredible strides in the sport of rifle shooting. Throughout his journey, he says with disarming candour, “I never remembered that I have blood cancer, i.e. CML. Thank you to

The Max Foundation and all the people who are connected directly and indirectly in my life”.



JAN 2017 PATIENT ADVOCATE

Shajahan K

Shajahan Naduvattam is not only a key member of Friends of Max Calicut (Kerala Chapter) and CML survivor, but also a senior member of Pratheeksha, a patient support organization for cancer patients. He believes The Max Foundation was instrumental in making him realize “what makes life wonderful.” Inspired by the care and support given to him during his battle with CML, Shajahan realizes that “everyone needs support to overcome challenges.

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