



October - December 2025

NEWSLETTER

VOL.10 NO.1

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The Salman Khan Foundation



MPN Horizons 10th International Conference, Marrakesh October 2025

FOM wins 3rd Poster Prize



The poster "Stronger Together: Voices of Hope in MPN, Amplified by Friends of Max" received global recognition, validating our work in MPN Patient Group Meetings, supporting newly diagnosed patients and strengthening an empowered community. These collective efforts remain at the heart of our advocacy goals.

Representing FOM at the conference were Anil Nagpal (Trustee) and Viji Venkatesh (Managing Trustee, also a Member of the MPN Steering Committee) joining over 80 other delegates; patients, caregivers, advocates and physicians from all over the world.

To view the other poster entries from around the world visit:
<https://mpnhz.cme-congresses.com/posters/>

Hot off the press

ESMO Asia Congress

December 2025



Education, Connection and Exchange were the core themes of the Patient Engagement Summit held during the ESMO Asia Congress 2025 in Singapore, December 2025. FOM was one amongst patient groups from the region to be invited and was represented by Viji Venkatesh. The objective was to develop solutions to the roadblocks preventing equal access to optimal care for all patients with cancer in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Over three days of insightful lectures and interactive workshops, participants exchanged knowledge, built meaningful networks and showed the way ahead to enhance patients' engagement in their own care.

FOM continues to further expand its leadership in the Patient Advocacy landscape.

AMMA SPEAKS

Ever since Friends of Max was set up in 2003, the fact that we are the largest support group in the world of its kind has never escaped my attention. And as the years have telescoped into one another packed with our patient interventions it has been imperative that our voice be heard not just within the country but in the international arena of CML, GIST and now MPN too.

Thousands of patients on life long treatment sharing and learning from one another and living each day like it is the first day of the rest of their lives.

Thousands of patients understanding the importance of compliance.

Thousands of parents taking care of their children and watching them grow up living with cancer.

Spotlight on FOM's Global Footprint



Engaging with global Patient Advocacy networks & building global connections



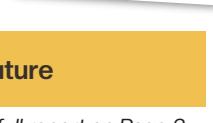
Sharing our Story - Expanding Visibility



Emerging Leadership



Recognition



2025 & Beyond - The Future

The full report on Page 2



London Global Cancer Week 2025

November 2025

"It was hugely satisfying to bring to the meeting a voice from this part of the world. Look forward to working together and contributing meaningfully to this venture", shares Viji Venkatesh after attending online the Round Table discussion during the London Global Cancer Week on "Financing Cancer Services Worldwide" on 26th November 2025.

This high-level roundtable brought together 25 leading figures from governments, global health institutions, financing agencies, philanthropy, academia and civil society to explore effective, efficient and equitable cancer financing in a post-aid era.

Participants assessed current financing gaps, explored domestic resource mobilisation opportunities, develop innovative funding models and build global solidarity mechanisms to ensure equitable access to cancer care.

Thousands of partners taking care of their loved one because their lives together depend upon it.

Thousands of patients facing the stigma of cancer and dealing with it.

Thousands of children seeing their parents grow old with cancer.

The lived experiences are varied and rich in learnings. And to be given a chance to showcase these with our peers in the global arena is an honour and matter of great pride.

This issue of our newsletter focuses on the various international meetings FOM has sent representatives to and our learnings therein too.

- Viji Venkatesh
Managing Trustee, Friends of Max, Member, Board of Directors,
The Max Foundation and Trustee, Being Human Salman Khan Foundation

Global Impact of FOM's Mission

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Engaging with Global Patient Advocacy Networks and building global connections

- CML Advocates Network (CMLAN)
- MPN Advocates Network (MPN AN)
- The Life Raft Group (LRG)
- International CML Foundation
- Common Sense Oncology
- Sarcoma Patient Advocacy Global Network (SPAGN)
- National Cancer Grid (NCG)
- European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO)
- UICC Global Network (UICC)

FOM's Global Mission:

A key pillar of FOM's vision is to ensure that the voices of patients and caregivers from the region are heard worldwide.

Through global collaborations our objective is to:

- Carry the voice of patients from this part of the world to be a part of global conversations shaping the future of cancer care
- Enable the exchange of Best Practices
- Improve patient care and Quality of Life for patients
- Strengthen FOM's Advocacy Capacity
- Build global and multiple Stakeholder Collaborations across borders
- Join the global community in the celebration of different occasions that increase awareness about CML, GIST, MPN and cancer in general



2nd row second from left: (Late)Dr. Nikhil Guhagarkar, FOM City Chapter Leader from Mumbai, and Member, 2015 Steering Committee, SPAGN (Sarcoma Patient Advocacy Global Network)



Viji Venkatesh, Managing Trustee, FOM, attending the ESMO Patient Engagement Summit 2025 held in Singapore in December



At the MPN Horizons 2025 Meeting held in Marrakesh Morocco in October



Representing patients' voices at an online session led by CSO Leadership Group on the Patient Charter and Survey, April 2024



FOM's "Mission 2K Free-of-Cost BCR-ABL Tests" poster at the CML HZ Conference, Lithuania (May 2024), with Nirmesh Prakash (FOM Trustee) receiving the award on behalf of FOM.



Viji Venkatesh with Sara Rothschild, Executive Director, Life Raft Group (LRG). LRG is committed to enhance the survival and quality of life for people living with Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumor (GIST)



Global partners supporting FOM's Chai for Cancer campaign



Pramod George, FOM Trustee (second from right, standing), with fellow CML Patient Advocates from around the world at the CML HZ Conference, Germany (May 2017).



iCMLf Global team members with FOM Trustees, Mumbai City Chapter Leaders, and The Max Foundation India team at the Max Center during their 2023 visit to Mumbai.



Pramod George, Jt. Secy FOM (left), with Brian J Drucker MD, the Father of CML



Viji Venkatesh and Pat Garcia-Gonzalez CEO, The Max Foundation at a special meeting of The Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) in Geneva, seen here with Cary Adams, CEO UICC, and Patient Advocates from Philippines, Venezuela and Mexico.



Nirmesh Prakash, Secretary, FOM (second from right), with global Patient Advocates at CML Horizons, Vilnius, 2024



Nagendran N seen discussing FOM's award winning poster with the Patient Advocate, Bahija Gouimi from Morocco, at the MPN Horizons 2024 in Poland



FOM programs, MPN Clinics, Project Diagnostics and Project Shiksha, receiving international recognition from the global cancer community at the MPN and CML Horizon conferences. FOM participates annually to share our story, learn and network. Seen here (from left to right) FOM Trustees, Viji Venkatesh, Anil Nagpal, Nirmesh Prakash and Nagendran N.

Viji Venkatesh sharing her voice and raising awareness how "Cancer Turned My World Upside Down", a powerful global exhibition launched by UICC in Geneva for World Cancer Day 2025



Viji Venkatesh at the Maximise Life Gala, The Max Foundation's annual global cancer fundraising and awareness event



FOM's poster on MPN FAQ booklets winning 3rd prize at the MPN HZ Conference, held in Netanya, Israel, in November 2022

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Sharing our Story - Expanding Visibility

- Conference Posters and Presentations
- Workshops and Panel Discussions-Patient voices- sharing challenges and lived experiences and Best Practices

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Emerging Leadership

- Friends of Max is invited to present at conferences
- Active voices in Global Steering committees
- Taking new patients under our wings- (MPN)
- Continued representation through offline/virtual platforms



Representing India, Viji Venkatesh, a member of the MPN Steering Committee 2025



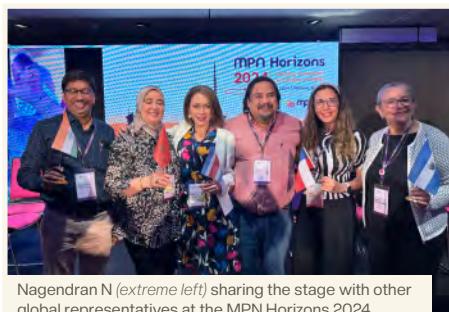
Pramod George, FOM Jt Secretary, at the 2015 Rising Sun held in Malaysia



Viji Venkatesh's presenting "Cultural Challenges of Patients in LMIC - the Eastern Philosophy of Acceptance" at the 2025 MPN Horizons conference in Marrakech, Morocco



With the other global delegates at the GIST Awareness Meeting held in Barcelona, Spain (2016)



Nagendran N (extreme left) sharing the stage with other global representatives at the MPN Horizons 2024



Viji Venkatesh receives the 2024 iCMLF Award for her remarkable contributions to advancing cancer care and patient support, particularly in low resource settings



Chai for Cancer awarded the SPAEN Advocacy in Action Award 2019 as an outstanding initiative for raising awareness and funds for cancer patients



Friends of Max wins the Global Award of Excellence 2016 for its effort in "GIST Awareness". Seen here Viji Venkatesh receiving the award at the Life Raft Group's Life Fest Conference held in Torrance, California

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Recognition

- Global Awards
- Visits from global partners
- Funding collaborations with international cancer networks
- Spotlight features showcasing the FOM model/s

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2025 & Beyond - The Future

"Two decades and a little more on, FOM's mission remains as pertinent as ever. Now we are committed to ensuring that our experiences can be turned into effective action that will lead the way for others world over setting on this path."

- Viji Venkatesh, Managing Trustee FOM



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Validation from our International Peers

“ VOICES ”



Friends of Max shows what global impact really looks like: meeting people where the barriers are highest, and still finding a way through. In India, where blood cancer patients face huge challenges like access to treatments and monitoring, FOM turns gaps in the system into pathways of support. That work strengthens all of us - it sets a standard for patient-first action, it shares practical models we can adapt across countries, and it reminds our whole network that equity is not a slogan, it is a daily commitment.

Giora Sharf,
Co-founder of the global CML Advocates Network



“ VOICES ”



Friends of Max was one of the first groups to join what was then our European network, bringing perspectives, experiences, and challenges from a different part of the world. By openly sharing those realities, Friends of Max reminded us of our responsibility as a community toward our patients, no matter where they are based—and grounded us in what truly matters. Especially within our small and closely connected GIST and sarcoma community, FOM's experience showed that challenges must be tackled together and that coming together makes all the difference—confirming that our vision of becoming a global community truly made sense.

Kathrin Schuster,
Executive Director of SPAGN



“ VOICES ”



FOM has had a huge impact in global health. Their work is an equalizer in access to care which goes well beyond access to life-saving medicines. It provides care, compassion, education and support, empowering patients and their families to fight their disease. FOM is not a support organization, it is a family to patients and a strong ally to healthcare providers.

Jorge Cortes,
Director of the Georgia Cancer Center at Augusta University and
Chair of the Board of Directors at International CML Foundation (iCMLf)



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To Donate:

Cheques should be drawn in favour of Friends of Max and couriered to our office in Worli (Mumbai)

To donate online visit www.friendsofmax.info

Receipts u/s 80 G of Income Tax Act, 1961 will be issued.

Friends of Max is registered as a Public Charitable Trust Regn No E-24284(B) Mumbai, dated 4-7-2007