

Palliative Care

IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE IN A SERIOUS ILLNESS LIKE CANCER



The content for this booklet was developed by Lily Zhang, a Princeton University intern during the summer of 2016 with guidance from Dr Reena Sharma, Head of Palliative Care Field Services under the supervision of Rajni B. Arora, volunteer member of the communication team at CanSupport, supported by Dr Parul Jain and Nilima Chawla, volunteers, CanSupport.

Illustrations © Tina Rajan, volunteer, CanSupport

Information provided on this booklet has been compiled from various sources in the public domain. Please contact our cancer telephone helpline for further information on cancer or cancer related services.

**LEADERS IN HOME BASED PALLIATIVE CARE SINCE 1996
AWARDED BY WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION**



DID YOU KNOW?

PALLIATIVE CARE is specialized medical care for people with a serious illness like cancer. It is focused on providing relief from pain, symptoms and stress related to the illness. Its goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family and make day to day life comfortable.

Palliative care is provided by a specially-trained team of doctors, nurses, counselors and other specialists who work together with patients and families to provide an extra layer of support. It is effective at any age and at any stage in a serious illness and can be provided along with curative treatment.



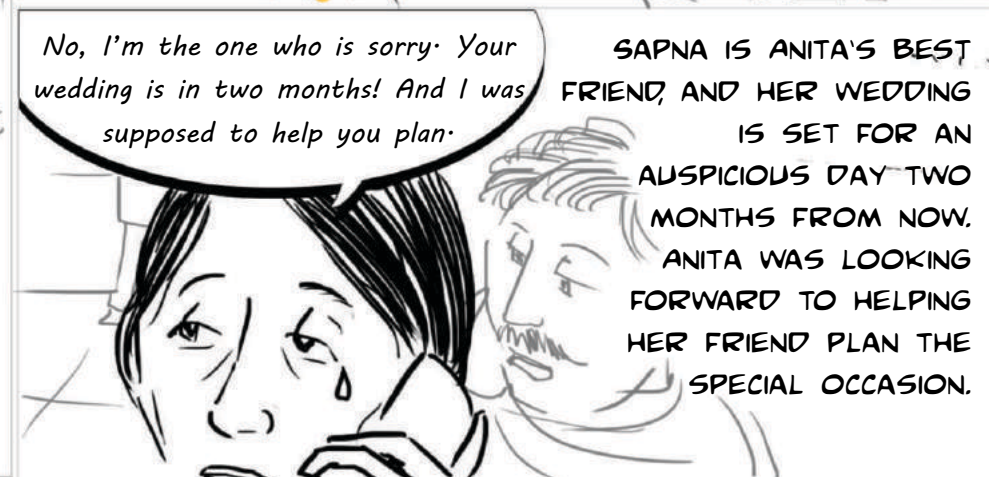
CANCER HELPLINE

41040539, 9899011212

Monday to Friday, 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM

Scene 1: The Hospital Visit

THIS IS ANITA... ANITA IS A MOTHER TAKING CARE OF HER SON AND ELDERLY PARENT. SHE HAS JUST BEEN TO THE HOSPITAL FOR A CHECKUP AS SHE HAS BEEN FEELING TIRED AND HAS ALSO BEEN LOSING WEIGHT.

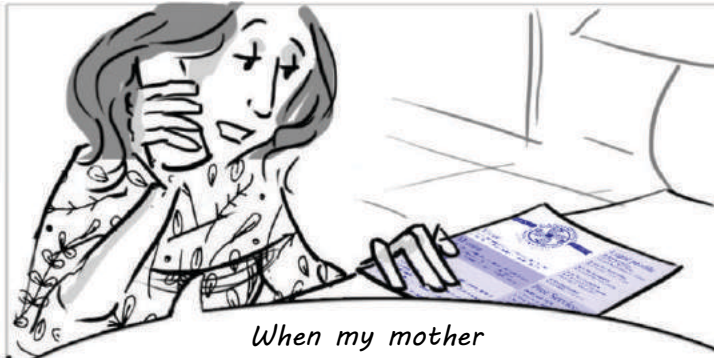


SAPNA IS ANITA'S BEST FRIEND, AND HER WEDDING IS SET FOR AN AUSPICIOUS DAY TWO MONTHS FROM NOW. ANITA WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO HELPING HER FRIEND PLAN THE SPECIAL OCCASION.

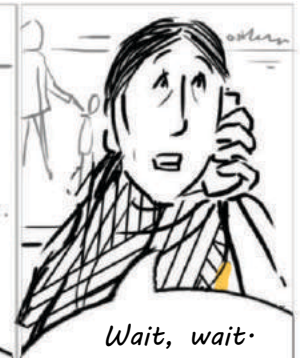
That should be the last thing
you need to worry about, Anita.
Your health is way more important.



What's going to happen, Sapna?
I don't know what to do now.
I'm worried about my family.
How do I tell them?



When my mother
was first diagnosed, I remember
feeling very fearful too, but a friend referred us to
CanSupport. They are experts in palliative care.

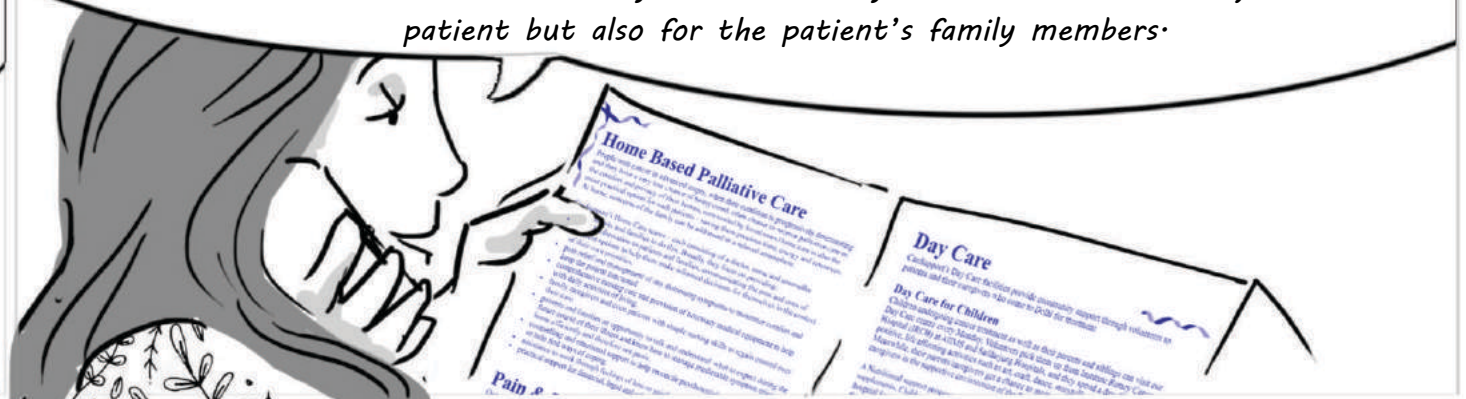


Wait, wait.
What do you
mean? What is
palliative care??

Oh, sorry. I forget how often people
don't know what it is! Palliative care
includes medical care, nursing, and
counseling for people with life-
threatening illnesses and
their families.



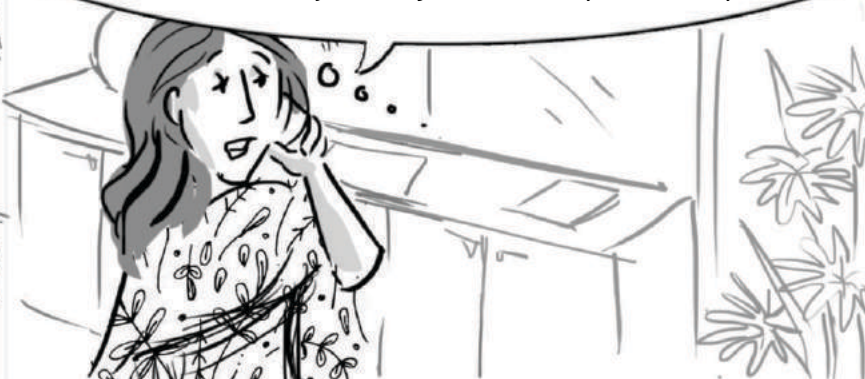
CanSupport's home care teams can provide information and help manage pain and the
side-effects of medication through different stages of the sickness—not just for the
patient but also for the patient's family members.



I don't know if
I can afford the
fees though...



CanSupport provides all of its services free of charge!
You can start by calling their telephone helpline.



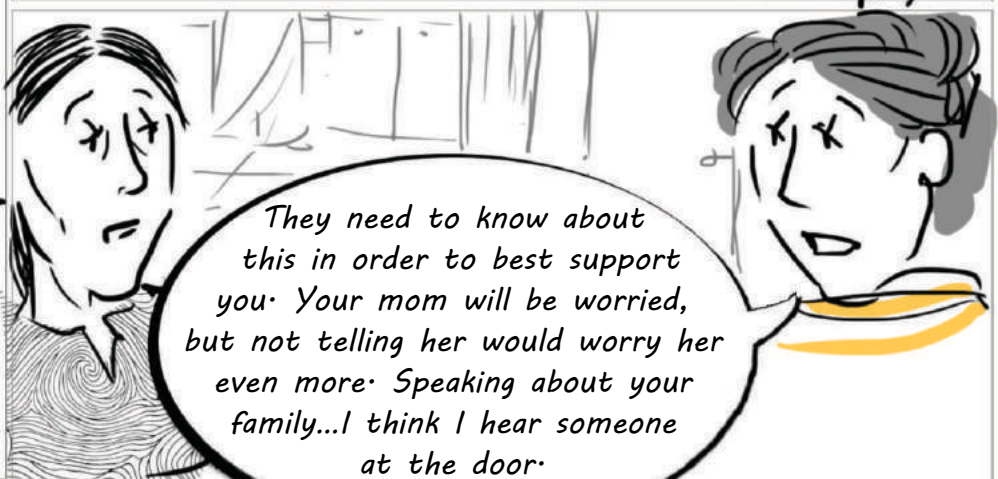
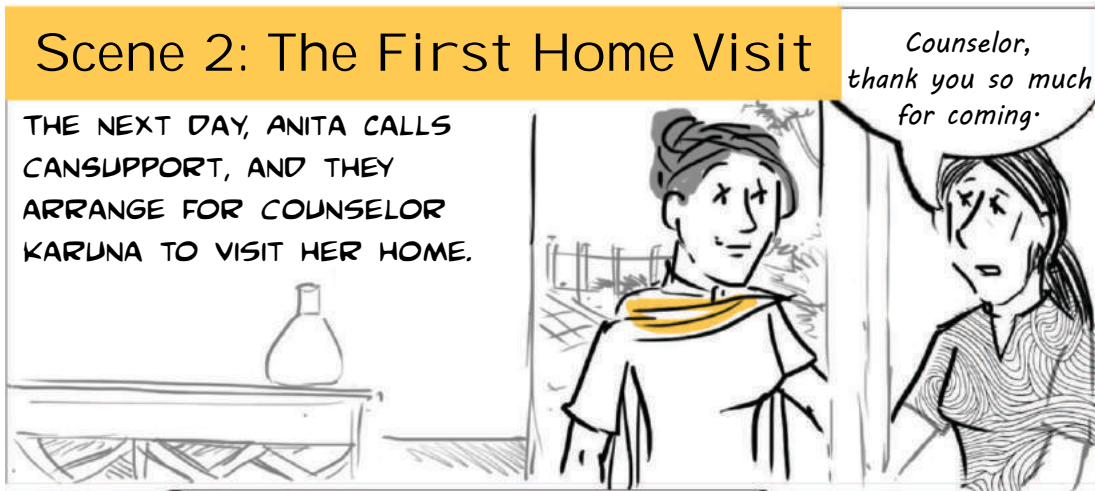
Oh, okay.
I'll give it
a try
then.



Let me know
how it goes!

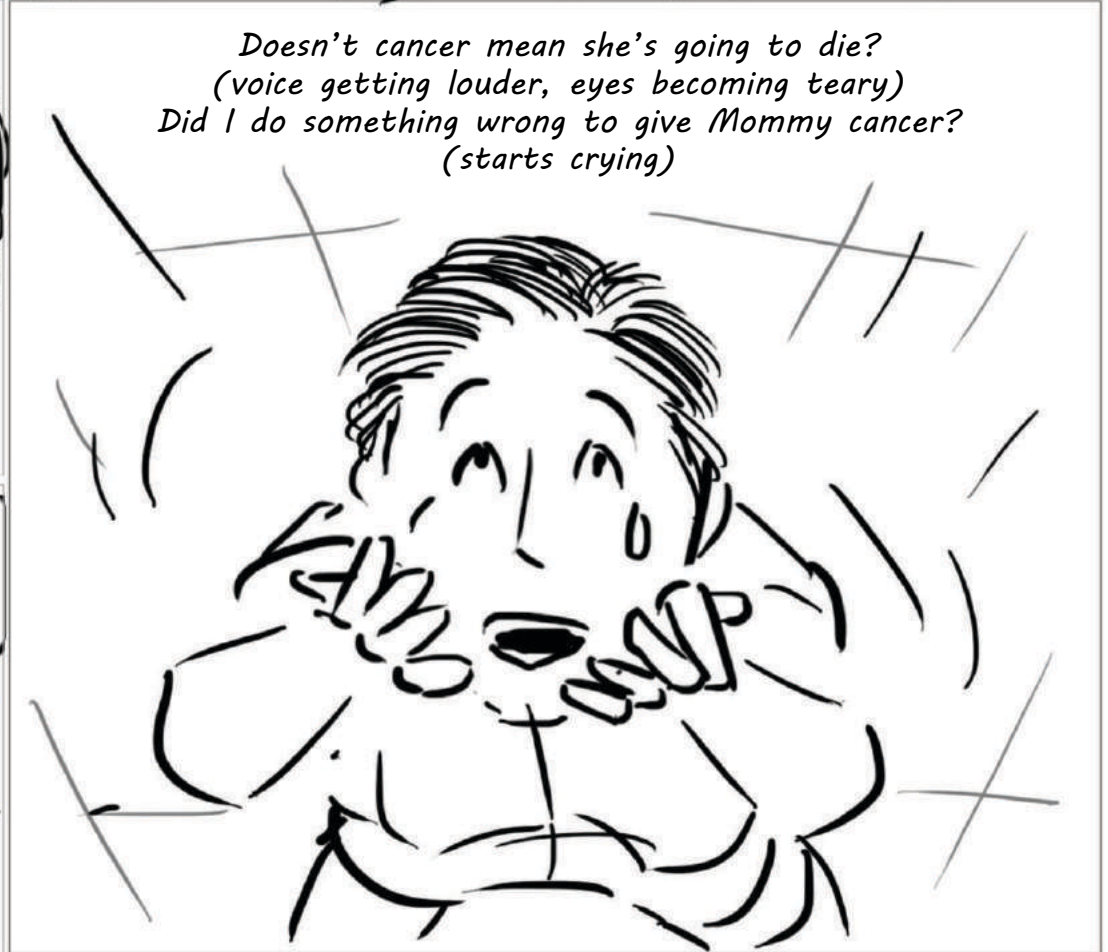
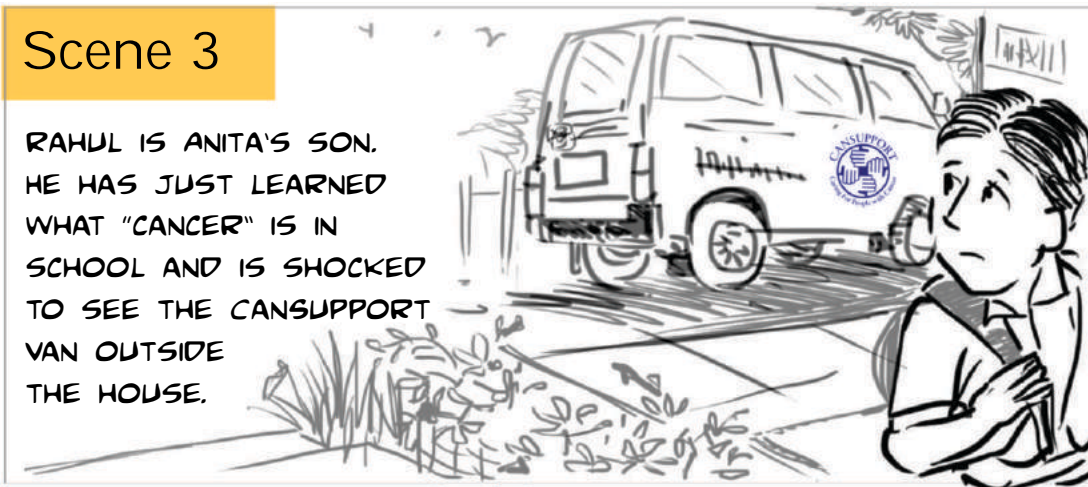
Scene 2: The First Home Visit

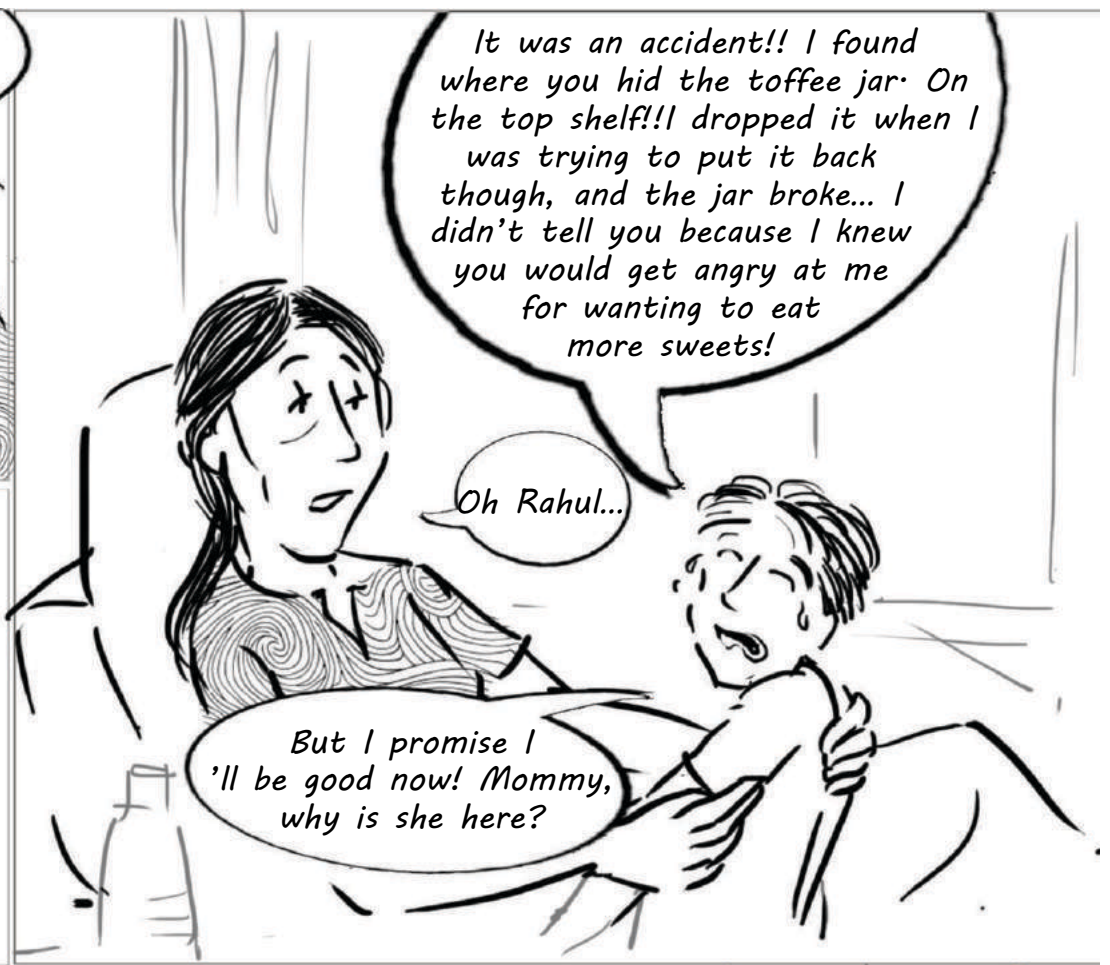
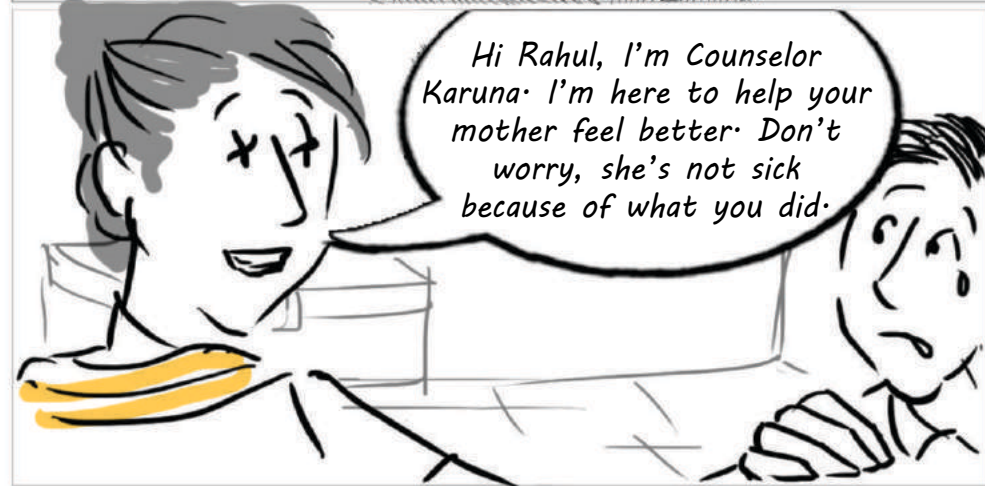
THE NEXT DAY, ANITA CALLS CANSUPPORT, AND THEY ARRANGE FOR COUNSELOR KARUNA TO VISIT HER HOME.



Scene 3

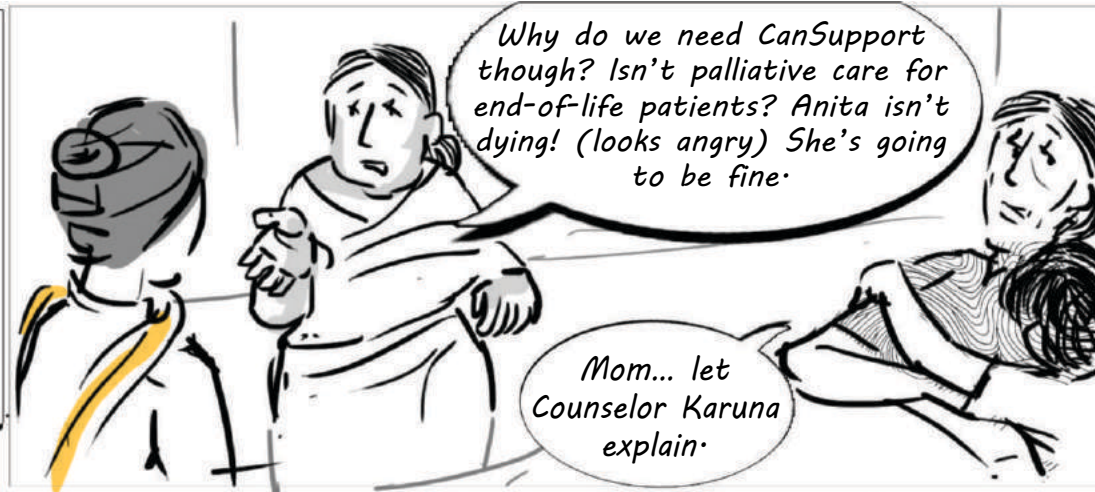
RAHUL IS ANITA'S SON. HE HAS JUST LEARNED WHAT "CANCER" IS IN SCHOOL AND IS SHOCKED TO SEE THE CANSUPPORT VAN OUTSIDE THE HOUSE.







I understand how you must be feeling. It's definitely hard news to accept. But the most important thing right now is to give Anita all the care and support possible.



Why do we need CanSupport though? Isn't palliative care for end-of-life patients? Anita isn't dying! (looks angry) She's going to be fine.

Mom... let Counselor Karuna explain.



I know Anita is a strong woman, and she has loving family members who will take good care of her, but the treatment is hard. Palliative care will offer relief from pain and the side effects of the treatment without interfering with it.



Do you have any other questions?

I'm afraid to ask this... How much time do I have? My best friend's wedding is in two months...

It will depend on how you respond to the treatment. Your cancer treatment will start soon, but you might still be able to attend the wedding.



It's also free of charge, mom. I think they can help us.

If you say so...



God...why me? Why now? What did I do?

You haven't done anything wrong, dear. Anyone can get cancer.

It makes me feel as though God has forsaken me. I feel so alone.



Shh, God hasn't left you. He loves you and so do we. You are not alone. We're all here to support you, How could He have left when you have so many people who care for you?



You don't take care of yourself well enough, AND you worry too much. Worrying makes you sick.



But Nani, mommy is already sick...

Oh mom, I should be the one saying that to you! You worry more than I do!

Well, I'm not the one sick right now!



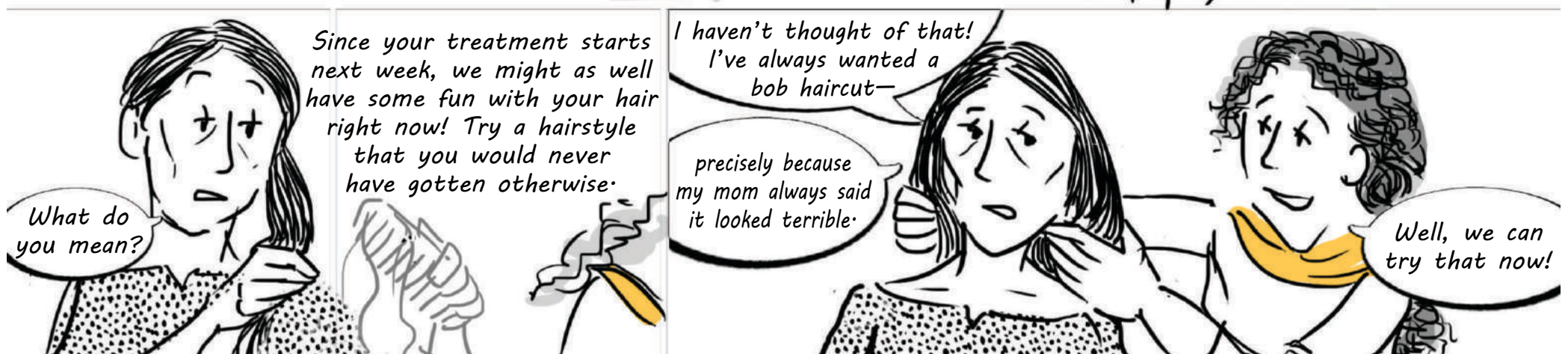
Mommy, Nani, I'm hungry. Let's go eat something instead of arguing...

THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE ROOM IS A LOT LIGHTER AS THEY ALL HEAD TO THE DINING ROOM.

Scene 4: The Second Visit

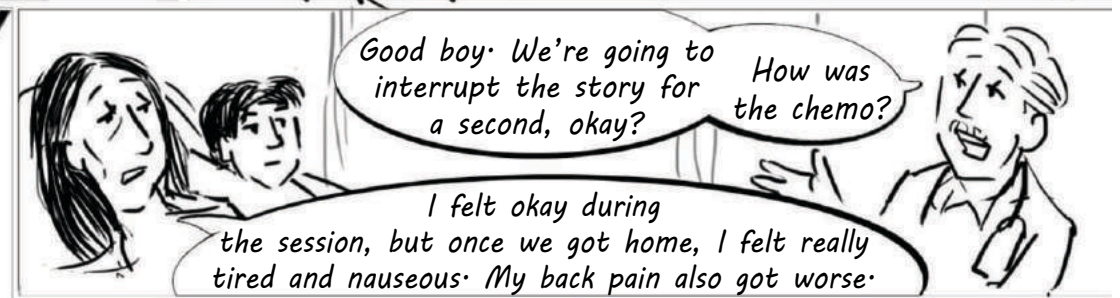
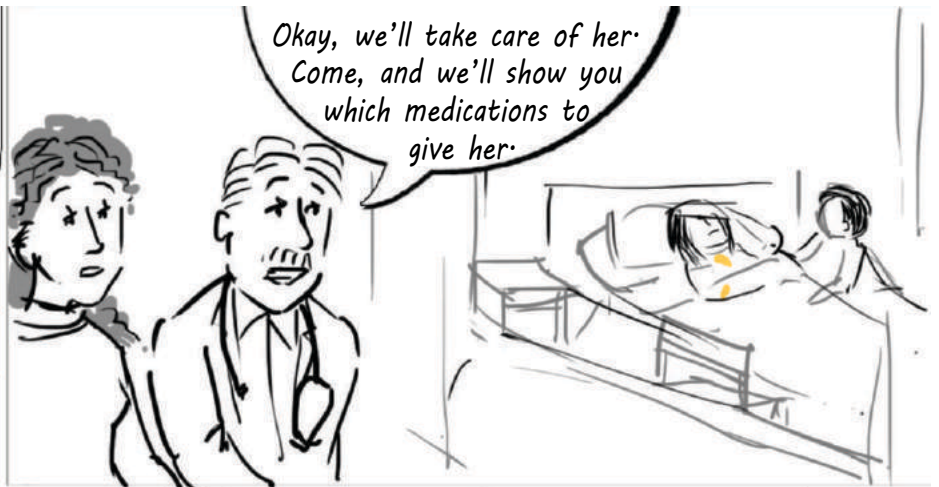
A WEEK HAS PASSED. FOR THE SECOND VISIT, COUNSELOR KARUNA ARRIVES WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF HER TEAM: DOCTOR ASHISH AND NURSE SHANTI.





Scene 5: The Third Visit

THE FOLLOWING WEEK, THE HOME CARE TEAM RECEIVES A CALL FROM ANITA. SHE HAS JUST FINISHED HER FIRST CHEMOTHERAPY SESSION AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE HOME CARE TEAM.



Scene 6: The Fourth Visit

AFTER TAKING THE MEDICINE TO MANAGE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF CHEMOTHERAPY, ANITA HAS BEEN FEELING MUCH BETTER. BUT AS THE DAY OF SAPNA'S WEDDING APPROACHES, ANITA FEELS INCREASINGLY ANXIOUS AND SAD. SHE HASN'T WANTED TO SEE HER FRIENDS IN A WHILE BECAUSE OF HER APPEARANCE. NOW SHE FEELS EMBARRASSED AND ASHAMED.

Anita dear, are you feeling alright?

I...I don't know. You guys have been more than generous in helping me solve my problems, and I don't want to sound ungrateful.

You can tell us how you feel. We're here to help in any way, remember?

I feel embarrassed of the way I look. I used to have such long hair... All the girls were going to do up their hair with lots of flowers for Sapna's wedding. I feel different from them now.

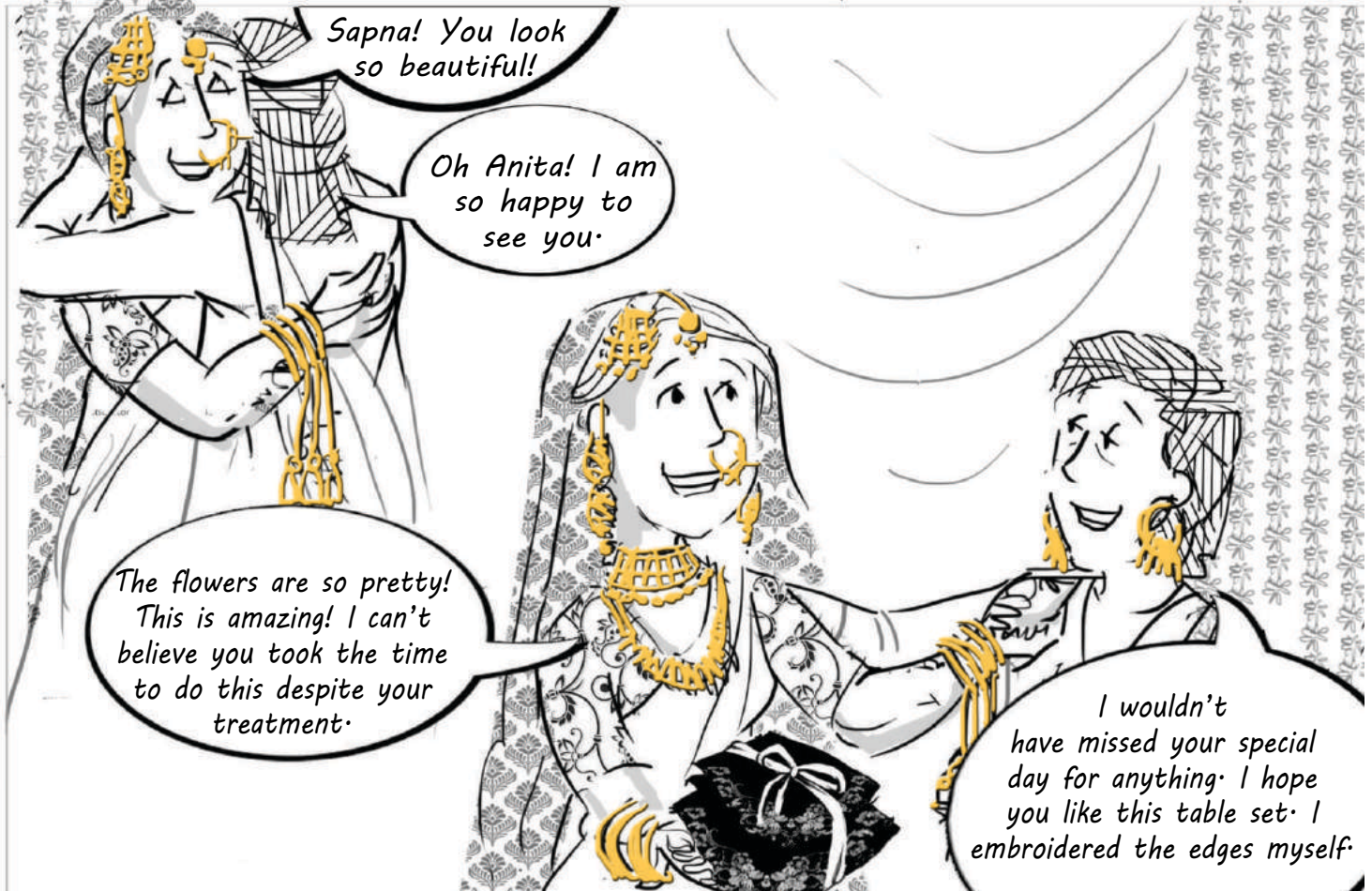
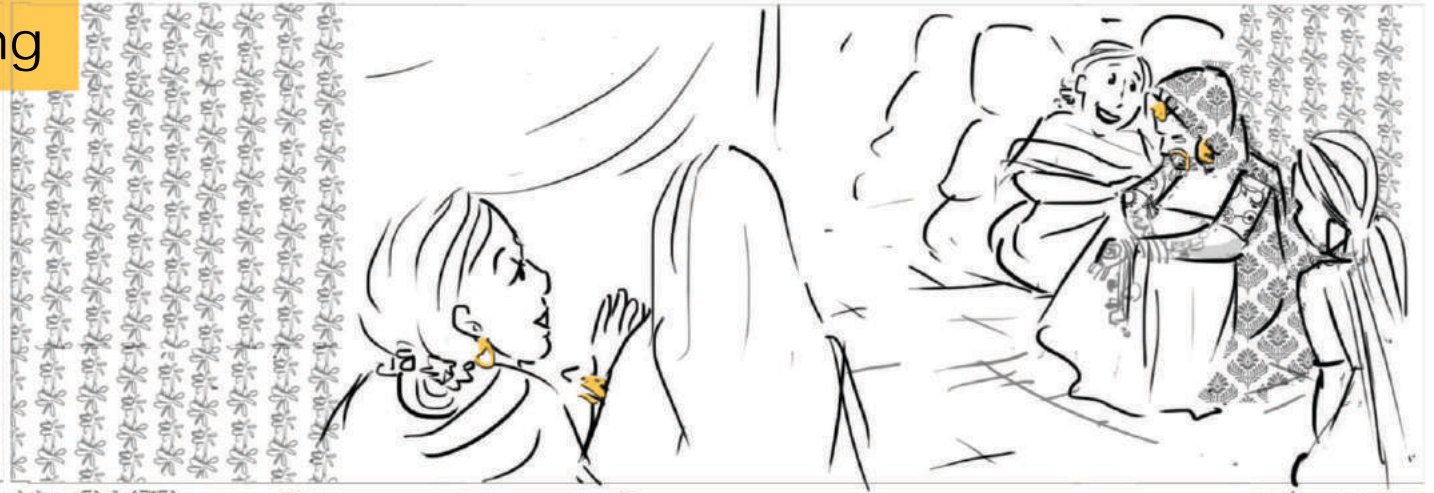
You're not different; you're special! You could always purchase a wig, or you could cover it with a pretty headscarf like this one.

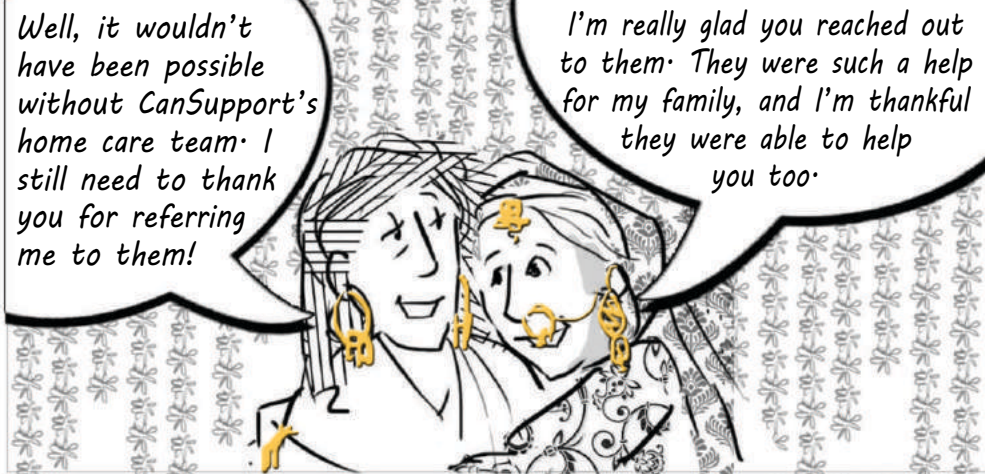
I can help you to wear it stylishly!



Scene 7: Sapna's Wedding

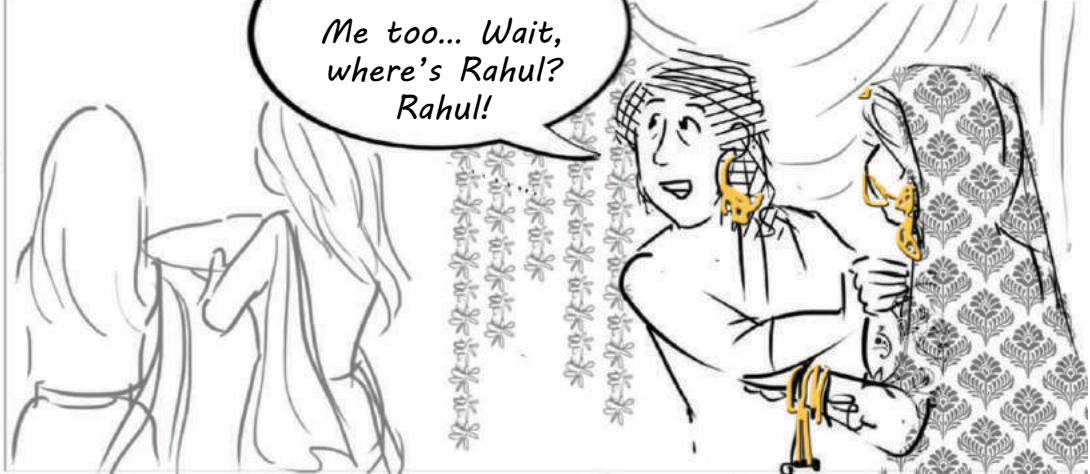
TODAY IS SAPNA'S WEDDING. ANITA AND HER FAMILY HAVE ARRIVED AT THE VENUE. ANITA LOOKS A BIT FEARFUL BUT MOSTLY HAPPY. NANI IS WALKING SLOWLY WITH HER. RAHUL HAS ALREADY HEADED FOR THE TABLE HEAPED WITH DESSERTS.






Well, it wouldn't have been possible without CanSupport's home care team. I still need to thank you for referring me to them!

I'm really glad you reached out to them. They were such a help for my family, and I'm thankful they were able to help you too.

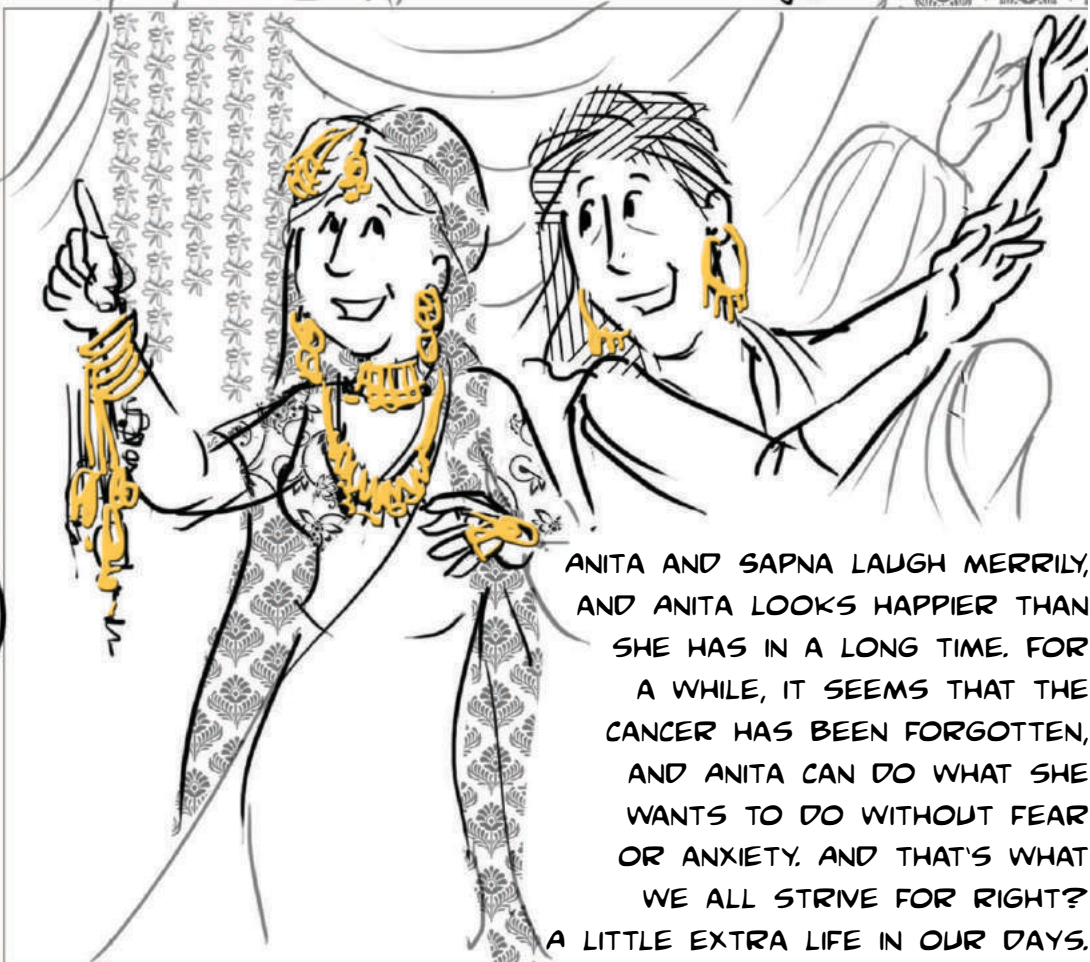


Me too... Wait, where's Rahul? Rahul!



Haha, let him eat as much as he wants today!

Oh okay fine... I guess today is a special occasion.



ANITA AND SAPNA LAUGH MERRILY, AND ANITA LOOKS HAPPIER THAN SHE HAS IN A LONG TIME. FOR A WHILE, IT SEEMS THAT THE CANCER HAS BEEN FORGOTTEN, AND ANITA CAN DO WHAT SHE WANTS TO DO WITHOUT FEAR OR ANXIETY. AND THAT'S WHAT WE ALL STRIVE FOR RIGHT? A LITTLE EXTRA LIFE IN OUR DAYS.

Epilogue

Hi there, readers! If you're like my Nani, you might need a few extra reminders after reading this comic!

What are you saying, child?
I can remember perfectly well.

Hmmm okay.
What is palliative care, Nani?

I know now that it's not end-of-life care. And it means that we focus more on the patient than the disease! And...

Rahul, stop making fun of your Nani!
Palliative care includes medical and nursing care as well as psychological and emotional support for the patient and family members. CanSupport's services can be accessed through their daycare centers, their outpatient clinics, or their home care teams.

And like Nani said, palliative care doesn't mean end-of-life care! CanSupport's home care teams are there to look after the patient through all stages of the illness.

You can reach out at any time for yourself or for a loved one. Contact the CanSupport Helpline for more information at +91 11 41010539 or email them at helpline@cansupport.org. They can help answer your questions or refer you to a survivor who can provide more personal insights.

I could have said all that...

Thank you for reading our story!
I hope it brought you some comfort.

WHAT CANSUPPORT DOES

FREE HOME BASED PALLIATIVE CARE

We have trained doctors, nurses and counsellors who visit cancer patients in their homes to provide palliative care services.

DAYCARE

We run three Day Care sessions every week for cancer patients under treatment. We offer them recreational and art therapies to de-stress them.

OUTPATIENT CLINIC

The clinics facilitate early intervention of palliative care in the cancer trajectory, enabling improved patient outcomes and continuity of care.

TELEPHONE HELPLINE

We have trained counsellors always available to listen to patients and provide them emotional and psycho-social support. We also facilitate financial help.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

VOLUNTEER

We can't run our services without our volunteers. No special skill is required, all you need is aptitude and empathy.

DONATE

To help as many people as possible, we need your donations to support our work. All our services are free of charge to the patients. Contact Navdha @ 95995 58368.

EVENTS AND SPONSORSHIPS

We organize annual events to raise awareness about cancer and raise funds for our programs. Your support in our events will help us to maximize our reach.

REFERS SOMEONE

If you or someone you know could benefit from the services of CanSupport, call our helpline on **41040539, 9899011212**

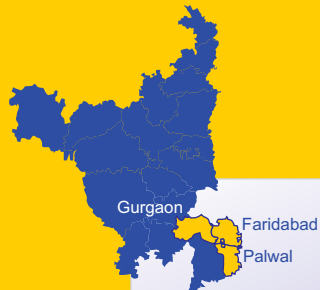
CANSUPPORT PALLIATIVE CARE PROGRAMS IN 4 STATES IN INDIA



PUNJAB

3 Teams

Amritsar
Gurdaspur
Bathinda



HARYANA

4 Teams

Faridabad
Gurgaon
Palwal



DELHI

20 Teams

All 11 districts



UP

4 Teams

Ghaziabad
Gautam Budh Nagar
Greater Noida
Meerut

**Head Office,
Palliative Care and Training Centre**
A-2, Gulmohar Park, New Delhi - 110049
Contact No: 011- 41010537

Amritsar Centre:
Amritsar Sewa Samiti,
Beri Gate Hospital,
Inner Circular Road,
BERi Gate Amritsar-143001
Contact no: 9501887956

Bathinda Centre:
Booth No. 6, Near Tulip Club
Ganpati Enclave, Dabawali Road,
Bathinda- 151001
Contact no: 9315905178

Meerut Centre:
A-18, Surya Nagar
Behind LIC Building,
Meerut - 250001
Contact No:- 8826576722



CANCER HELPLINE

Delhi/NCR 011-41010539
+91 9899011212
Amritsar +91 9501887956
Bathinda +91 9315905178
Meerut +91 8826576722

For more information visit us on www.cansupport.org

f CanSupport CanSupportND cansupport

Monday to Friday, 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM