

## MAHEK

**M** Mutual support  
**A** Activities to showcase your talents  
**H** Happiness enough to be shared  
**E** Extending awareness  
**K** Keeping alive the spirit to fight and win



Dr. Asha Kapadia

**Mahek** or fragrance, soft and gentle, spreads around to create a pleasant atmosphere. MAHEK – The Hinduja Hospital Breast Cancer Support Group aims to bring joy in the lives of its patients. It was **Dr. Asha Kapadia** and her team of Oncology Volunteers who founded '**MAHEK**' on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2003. The quest continues successfully touching many lives, **empowering** women and giving hope to fight and win.

### Why MAHEK?

A woman with cancer needs someone to confide, someone empathetic to share many of her feelings, someone who would care and **MAHEK** paved the way for all of them to ventilate & share each others feelings. According to Dr. Asha Kapadia, Patients with cancer and their family members face intense fears, anxieties and frustration. If these emotions are expressed without inhibition with compassion a strong foundation could be laid for mutual understanding and trust. This is something which treatment of cancer itself will not cure. The human spirit is greater than the forces that attack it and is often the most powerful weapon against them. **It can overcome fear, anger, depression, can give strength, courage and most of all 'hope'**. Cancer is a formidable enemy but it is not invincible.

How MAHEK works?

MAHEK provides a forum where members can meet periodically at a pre-designated venue to interact with each other and their treating doctor. Venue could be a restaurant, or a park or a patient's house or any other interesting place, which is liked or suggested by them. On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2008, ie woman's day, MAHEK organized its 8<sup>th</sup> such meeting at Hotel Patio, Juhu.

- Registered patients are informed about the venue and timing on phone and by mail.
- Once the patients are seated they are requested to introduce themselves. The seating arrangement is a roundtable which allows the patients to interact with each other.
- Patients are encouraged to share their experiences which may relate to diet, chemo, side effects, hair fall, wigs etc. After the initial hesitation, usually, the dialogue begins, generating enthusiastic participation from all members who take keen interest in each other's experiences.
- The conversation is not restricted to disease. In fact patients are encouraged to talk about other subjects as well, like YOGA, ART OF LIVING, LAUGHTER CLUB OR ANY OTHER ACTIVITY that helps during and after the treatment. Even the patient relatives can participate and share their experiences...anything that maybe of interest to the participants is welcome.
- Event closes with participant feedback, tea/ coffee and snacks.

We now wish to introduce a virtual forum where you can continue your conversation with each other beyond the hospital premises. Register at [www.hindujahospital.com/register](http://www.hindujahospital.com/register) for a virtual meeting with your patient colleagues.