"The role of customized infection control services has come into the spotlight"

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Sambit Sahu, Director, Sodexo Healthcare India, talks about how his company is contributing to the COVID-19 fight

How is Sodexo India contributing to the fight against COVID-19?

Sodexo provides Integrated Facilities Management (IFM) solutions to hundreds of Government and Private Hospitals, Medical Colleges, PHCs, CHCs, Pharmaceutical facilities, Educational Institutes, Mining & Offshore facilities, and Corporate workplaces across India. In the healthcare sector alone, Sodexo delivers services at 450+ sites, maintains 52,000+ medical equipments, serves 65,000+ meals, and manages 35,000+ linen across 10 million+ square feet of the facility every day. We also provide inpatient dining and meal services for doctors, nurses, staff, students and visitors in most of these healthcare facilities.

In recent times, as part of essential services, our teams have been supporting the healthcare workers in the hospital environment with soft services, technical, disinfection, and food services. Given our expertise and experience in environmental cleaning which was largely restricted to critical areas like ICUs and operation theatres to name a few; we have been successful in extending these services in the COVID Care sections in the wake of the COVID pandemic outbreak. Learnings from our global teams, especially the early knowhow from Wuhan was helpful as we and our clients were better prepared.

In India, we currently are taking care of a few dedicated Quarantine facilities in hospitals for COVID patients. Further, we are

working with Central Health Authorities and a few state governments, especially in the area of Infection control for Quarantine Facilities. Ensuring the upkeep of Biomedical Equipments which are critical for patient care in more than 450 Government medical healthcare facilities through our Clinical Technology Management project in West Bengal is also a top priority.

What technological advancements are driving healthcare solutions in times of Covid-19?

The role of customized infection control services, better known as quarantine services, in healthcare institutions has come into the spotlight. Sodexo has come up with an advanced solution named 'Protecta' for environmental cleaning services in India. It is a known fact that patients and healthcare workers are privy to hospital-acquired infection either from infected COVID patients or the infected area. Therefore, infection control services that were hitherto only a part of critical care units like operation theatres and intensive care in the past; now need to be extended to the entire hospital space, as COVID is known to spread through a simple touch. With improved cleaning that goes beyond visible cleaning to microbiological cleaning, we can mitigate the risk of the spread of the virus.

Additionally, the following technological advancements are supporting business continuity through the COVID times:

- Digitization of services – In equipment maintenance and in food services, like cashless transactions
- UV disinfection with pulsed-xenon to combat Hospital Acquired Infection
- Use of technology for training healthcare workers, for example – Sure Wash for hand hygiene
- Robotics to facilitate services such as portering, to minimize human contact in high risk areas.