

Telehealth: IAP-Healthphone launched to address malnutrition in India

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The formal launch of the IAP HealthPhone program, the world's largest digital mass education programme to tackle the challenge of malnutrition in women and children at the national-level in India was done on June 02, 2015 at New Delhi.

IAP HealthPhone is a public private partnership initiative by Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP) and HealthPhone and supported by Vodafone India. It is a unique program that leverages the increasing penetration of mobile phones in the country to educate over 6 million girls and women between 13 and 35 years of age and their families on better health and nutrition practices by 2018.

The program will achieve its objectives by widely promoting and distributing four re-edited videos from the Poshan series, jointly produced by MWCD and UNICEF in 18 Indian languages. The Poshan videos address issues of status of women, the care of pregnant women and children under two, breastfeeding and the importance of balanced diet, health and simple changes in nutritional care practices that can notably enhance nutrition levels.

To kick start the program, IAP has forged a unique partnership with Vodafone India to encourage the viewing of the four videos. Vodafone will enable its customers to view/download the videos free of data charges and on viewing the 4 videos, the user will receive a talk time incentive of Rs 10/-.

Vodafone will send out approximately 300 million text messages to its subscribers every year to promote the viewing of the four videos. It will also support IAP to undertake a comprehensive communication campaign to promote the IAP HealthPhone program across the country via print and social media.

IAP HealthPhone partners are committed to strengthen the program through their networks and sync their efforts to address malnutrition systemically. As next steps they will equip AWW, ASHAs and ANMs with a HealthPhone microSD card, containing a library of videos, to enable them to share health & nutrition knowledge with women, families and the

communities they serve. It will also partner with social media giants (such as Facebook, Twitter and Google) to use their exponentially growing channels to reach more - rural and urban - caregivers.

The three-year campaign by IAP HealthPhone is expected to benefit the health of 60 million children in India born by 2025 and will be transformative for India's fight against malnutrition.