

Fortis Healthcare and wayForward collaborate on emotional wellness programme

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Fortis Healthcare, India's leading Healthcare provider, and wayForward, a digital, mental and emotional health company based in USA, launched an app-based wellness programme in India.

The programme uses techniques of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) and Mindfulness to potentially help millions solve problems caused by stress, anxiety and other emotional or mental health issues in the comfort of their own homes, without the fear of stigma, through its unique "coach in your pocket" concept. The event was also marked by experts who spoke about stress and its impact on individuals and organizations in the present times.

Dr. Samir Parikh, Director, Mental Health and Behavioural Science at Fortis Healthcare said, "Mental and emotional health issues are more common than we imagine and impact almost every family, placing a significant burden on individuals and society. Clinical experience and research data show that stress is ruining relationships and hurting our overall health and wellbeing. I believe this programme would make a positive impact on the wellbeing of individuals, hence benefitting organizations and societies at large."

Launching the program, Mr Bhavdeep Singh, CEO, Fortis Healthcare said, "Many people today find themselves unable to manage daily stress in professional lives. They also find it hard to consult a mental health specialist as they feel embarrassed about it. Despite advancements on many fronts in India, there is a low level of awareness regarding stress and mental health. In such a scenario, this HR conclave by Fortis Healthcare and wayForward is a welcome initiative to bring various stakeholders together. This digital health programme is a very innovative and much-needed solution for our increasingly stressed society."

Dr. Navya Singh, Founder, wayForward and researcher at Columbia University, New York explained, "Our mission is simple - to ensure that everyone has access to mental and emotional health support at all times. To accomplish this goal, we have created a solution based on scientifically proven techniques, which is available to users through their smartphones. Our research with users of the wayForward app in the US has shown that more than 80% cases showed improvement in just 3

weeks. The study also highlighted that problems, such as overeating, sleep disturbances and lifestyle diseases, can be consequences of mental and emotional health issues."

The Asia-Pacific edition of Staying@work survey (2013-14) conducted by Towers Watson for Indian employees, revealed almost 1 in every 3 Indian employers had instituted stress or resilience management programmes in 2013 and an almost equal number planned to follow suit in 2014. With stress being ranked as #1 lifestyle risk factor in India, this number was expected to grow.