BioSpectrum
the business of Bi
24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

Close the Care Gap: Role that each of us can play to combat cancer

13 March 2023 | Views | By Preeti Malhotra, Co-Owner & Practice Head - Wellness, Great Place to WorkÂ® India

It is great to see many corporates recognising the importance of preventive action and also role of caregivers



The first case of Cancer was reported in the 16th and 17th centuries, and while there has been tons of research done on the subject including advancement in the treatment, the ‘C’ word still creates a sense of fear, uncertainty, and helplessness for most people.

Today unfortunately, almost all of us know of someone affected by cancer or undergoing treatment. Many of us have lost our loved ones too to this dreadful disease. The statistics have only worsened in the last few years with research stating that 1 in 10 Indians is likely to get cancer once in their lifetime.

As per research by World Health Organisation, National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research and National library of medicine and Lancet Global health journal:

- About one in every five, or 21 per cent, cases of cervical cancer globally are reported from India
- Breast Cancer is the most common cancer for women in India and 1 woman is detected of Breast Cancer every 4 minutes
- Mortality due to tobacco use in India is estimated at upwards of 3500 persons every day and oral cancer is the most prevalent for men

These figures are scary and definitely alarming. In addition to this the economic burden in terms of GDP for the country, is estimated to be in the range of US dollars 36 to 40 billion by 2030 considering the potential productive life lost.

Why am I writing about it? The most important data point is that the number of deaths due to cancer in India as compared to USA and other developed countries is almost 50% higher. This is not due to lack of healthcare facilities or treatment but due to late detection. Like most things about health, we have a reactive approach to cancer.

Experts tell us that a very large number of cancers are curable if detected early and thus it is high time that we adopt a proactive approach to cancer and build in a discipline of regular and consistent check-ups irrespective of family history or symptoms. On one hand where we expect work to happen on making cancer treatment affordable and accessible and the relevant stakeholders are working in the area, there is room for each of us to make an impact.

Each of us can play an active role in ensuring that we spread awareness and conduct timely tests for ourselves and our loved ones. As leaders in organisations, we can build these into annual health checks for our employees. It is great to see many corporates recognising the importance of preventive action and also role of caregivers. Most progressive organisations have policies to support and provide flexible working options for caregivers. Moving from intent to action, requires a mindset change and if each one of us commit to take action, it will result in a significant multiplier impact.

Let us take a pledge to take at least one action that impacts our sphere of influence.

Preeti Malhotra, Co-Owner & Practice Head - Wellness, Great Place to Work® India