

**PRESS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Publication*

**Fortis Escorts Heart Institute (FEHI) in association with Association of Physician of India, Varanasi organized a CME to spread awareness on heart failure and management of the disease**

- *India being the global capital for hypertension, obesity and diabetes makes the risk factors for incidence of heart failure higher*
- *Prevalence of heart failure in India is very high due to various lifestyle factors*

**Varanasi, Saturday, 23 July, 2016:** In an educative initiative towards increasing awareness on what heart failure is and the role of the Heart Failure Clinic at Fortis Escorts Heart Institute, the institute organized an event for all the doctors in Varanasi. The event was spearheaded by **Dr. Z S Meharwal, Director, Cardiac Surgery, Fortis Escorts Heart Institute**. The event was also chaired by **Dr. (Prof) Madhukar Rai**, API Chairman and HOD Endocrinology, Benaras Hindu University. **Dr. Alok Kumar Singh**, Chairperson and **Mr. N K Srivastava**, Secretary API also participated in the program.

Countless number of patients suffering from heart failure are on the recipient list for heart transplant. The first heart transplant was conducted at FEHI on 17 year old Prince who had been suffering from end stage heart failure. Oshin Goel, 23 year old youngster from Rajasthan was given just fifteen days of life having been suffering from end stage heart failure. It had been a long wait for both of them before a heart was available for transplant into their bodies.

According to Dr Z S Meharwal, “though it is difficult to estimate the heart failure population due to lack of proper registration, there are approximately 90 million patients with heart failure with almost two million added each year to heart failure. Mortality in patients with heart failure who are in functional class III and IV is as high as 30-40% each year. There have been many advances in the management of patients with advanced heart failure. Cardiac transplant is considered the best treatment for these patients. Though first transplant was performed in India as early as 1994, the number of transplants is still very small due to lack of donors and awareness in the society. Patients where heart transplant cannot be performed due to non-availability of donor or some other cause, mechanical circulatory support devices (ventricular assist devices) can be used.

Advanced heart failure can be caused by coronary artery disease (blockages in arteries of the heart), diseases of the valves as well as weakness of the heart muscles of unknown cause. If these conditions are not treated in time, the heart continues to get recurrent weaker ultimately leading to end stage heart failure. These patients have very poor long term survival.”

According to NCBI (National Centre for Biotechnology Information) reliable estimates of heart failure are lacking in India because of the absence of a surveillance program to track incidence, prevalence, outcomes and key causes of heart failure. Based on disease-specific estimates of prevalence and incidence, rates of heart failure NCBI states that prevalence of heart failure in India due to coronary heart disease, hypertension, obesity, diabetes and rheumatic heart disease to range from 1.3 to 4.6 million.

**Dr Meharwal, Director Cardiac Surgery & Coordinator Heart Failure Clinic** said, “Heart failure is a condition where heart is not able to perform its duty. No known cause has been identified as I see cases from every age group including very young people. Due to lack of awareness patients suffering from heart failure stage are clueless about its management and guidelines making them suffer more.”

In the condition of end stage heart failure a patient suffers from pain, swelling and anxiety. It becomes very important to deal with patients with care and educate them about its management. Many patients with heart failure condition go undiagnosed or undetected. In case of a family history, one should immediately consult a cardiologist to detect any probabilities of heart failure. If diagnosed with a heart failure the patient can then register for a heart transplant at a healthcare provider or hospital where heart failure clinic or programs assist the patient to manage their conditions and in hospitals where transplants are conducted. The heart failure program is designed in such a way that the patients are given continuous support to manage the heart failure conditions.

Heart transplants are the only answer to patients suffering from end stage heart failure and this is totally dependent on the availability of a heart. The lack of awareness about the noble act of organ donation inhibits families from coming forward to participate in this. Fortis Escorts Heart Institute has taken the initiative in spreading awareness on the noble act of organ donation and hopes that the huge vacuum that lies between demand and availability of organs will diminish and we will be able to save more lives suffering from heart failure and for whom heart transplant remains the best treatment option.

### **About Fortis Escorts Heart Institute**

*Fortis Escorts Heart Institute (FEHI), Delhi, a pioneer and centre of excellence in cardiac care, is celebrating 28 years of path-breaking work and service to the numerous heart patients, who have benefitted from treatment, at this outstanding facility. Armed with clinical expertise and cutting-edge medical technology, the hospital has set enviable benchmarks in Cardiac Bypass Surgery, Minimally Invasive Surgery, Interventional Cardiology, Non-invasive Cardiology, Pediatric Cardiology and Pediatric Cardiac Surgery. Till date, FEHI has successfully completed over 1,79,000 Coronary Angiographies, over 97,000 Cardiac Surgeries and almost 62,000 Coronary Angioplasties, in addition to several life-saving procedures. The hospital also performed India's first Trans Catheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) and Bioresorbable Vascular Scaffold (BVS); Asia Pacific's first Directional Atherectomy, Angioscopy, Drug Eluting Stenting, etc. Over the years, FEHI has cloned a Heart Care Network of 19 hospitals and Heart Command Centers in India and abroad. It has also launched the revolutionary e-ICU program, enabling remote and timely access to critical care. Fortis Escorts Heart Institute has won numerous awards and accolades, the most recent among them being the 'Best Cardiology Hospital' at the ICICI Lombard & CNBC TV18 India Healthcare Awards for 2012, 2013 and the No 1. Ranking in the Private Cardiac category Hospital by The Week Nielson Best Hospitals Survey, 2014 and 2015.*

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