

Fortis Healthcare and wayForward collaborate on a unique emotional wellness programme to combat workplace stress

First time in India, a digital health programme to manage stress and related ailments

New Delhi, August 27, 2016: 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, at a special event in Delhi today. 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."*

While concluding the event with a vote of thanks, **Mr. Ritvik Singh, CEO, wayForward** said, *"Our USP is our unique proprietary app algorithm that overcomes the barrier of limited access to experts. The programme provides high-quality wellness support en-mass and allows experts to help many more people than is possible with one-on-one support. This becomes especially crucial in a country like India where there is a severe shortage of mental health professionals."*

PRESS RELEASE

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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.ⁱ The predictions came true. A recent study conducted by The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) showed that a company in the banking/finance sector, with an average workforce of 5,000 employees, loses approximately Rs 100 crore in productivity losses a year because of stress-related issues. Stress costs an IT-ITeS company with 10,000 employees, about Rs 50 crore and a company in the travel and hospitality sector with about 2,000 employees, a little over Rs 10 crore.ⁱⁱ Almost 1 in every 3 Indian employers has instituted stress or resilience management programmes in 2013 and an almost equal number plan to follow suit in 2014. With stress being ranked as #1 lifestyle risk factor in India, this number is likely to grow.ⁱⁱⁱ A study by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations found that India’s rapid economic expansion has boosted corporate profits and employee incomes, but has also sparked a surge in workplace stress and lifestyle diseases that few Indian companies have addressed.^{iv}

About Fortis Healthcare Limited

Fortis Healthcare Limited is a leading integrated healthcare delivery service provider in India. The healthcare verticals of the company primarily comprise hospitals, diagnostics and day care specialty facilities. Currently, the company operates its healthcare delivery services in India, Dubai, Mauritius and Sri Lanka with 45 healthcare facilities (including projects under development), approximately 10,000 potential beds and 329 diagnostic centres.

About wayForward

wayForward Health Pvt. Ltd. is a technology-based emotional wellness company based out of New York and New Delhi. Its core team comprises researchers, trained psychologists, executive coaches and counsellors led by international experts in the field of mental health. The company provides scientifically-proven programs for managing wide range of mental and emotional health problems, including stress and anxiety.

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ⁱ <http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/indian-employers-rank-stress-no-1-lifestyle-risk-factor-survey-558079>

ⁱⁱ <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/company/corporate-trends/your-stress-has-left-your-companys-earnings-depressed/articleshow/53279624.cms>

ⁱⁱⁱ http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/stress-levels-rising-in-india-inc-survey-109112700063_1.html

^{iv} <http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/indian-employers-rank-stress-no-1-lifestyle-risk-factor-survey-558079>

^v http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/stress-levels-rising-in-india-inc-survey-109112700063_1.html