

## Mental Health Awareness Conference- “Re-Thinking Mental Health”

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**October 11, 2019 New Delhi:** Mental health is a major concern worldwide and India is not far behind in sharing this. If we evaluate developments in the field of mental health, the pace appears to be slow. The neglect of mental health is evident from a World Health Organization report which estimated that 50 million Indians suffered from depression. Almost 20 % of children and adolescents suffer from some form of mental illness, but a very small proportion of them are able to access mental health services that results in a huge treatment gap. The situation is particularly grim in India where almost 30 % of population of the country consists of children in the age group between 0 and 14 years. There could be several possible reasons for this gap ranging from stigma associated with mental illnesses, lack of resources for mental health and apathy on part of policy makers to counter this problem.

With an aim to bring together all stakeholders of mental health (service providers: medical and non-medical professionals, Government bodies, national associations, corporates, media, influencers, academicians) and discuss serious concerns around Mental Health in India, FICCI Aditya Birla CSR Centre for Excellence in partnership with **Nuvoco Vistas Corp. Ltd., Apollo Hospitals, The Health Collective** and **Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences (IHBAS)** organised **Re-thinking Mental Health** on October 11, 2019 at FICCI, Federation House, New Delhi.

During the inaugural session, Dr. Prabodh Seth, Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India said



that the government has decided to set up a National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (NIMHR) near Bhopal. The cost of the project would be Rs 179.54 crore in the first three years. Dr Seth highlighted that the objectives of the NIMHR include providing rehabilitation services to people with mental illness, capacity development in the area of mental health rehabilitation, policy framing and advanced research in mental health rehabilitation.

Dr Achal Bhagat, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist, Apollo Hospitals, and Chairperson, Saarthak; Ms Amrita Tripathi, Founder, Health Collective; Ms. Rajvi Mariwala,



Director, Mariwala Health Initiative; Ms Pattie Gonsalves, Project Director, Sangath; Prof Aparna Khanna, Department of Development Communication and Extension, Lady Irwin College (University of Delhi); Dr Ambrish Dharmadhikari, Head, Medical Services (Psychiatrist), Mpower Foundation; Ms Deepa Singh Bais, PhD student and depression and anxiety survivor; Mr Tanmoy Goswami, Sanity Correspondent, The Correspondent, and

depression survivor; Mr Anant Zanane, news journalist and depression survivor; Dr Kamna Chhibber, Head, Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences, Fortis Healthcare; Mr Anuj Dayal, ED, Corporate Communication, DMRC; Mr Balendu Sharma, Director, Localization and Accessibility, Microsoft India; Mr Shelendra Singh, HR, Nuvoco Vistas Corp Ltd; Mr Mohit Dhingra, alumnus, Young India Fellowship, Ashoka University; Mr Vanaj Moorthy, student, The Shri Ram School; Dr Amit Sen, Director, Senior Child



and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Children First; Parveen Shaikh, Psychologist and Head (Outreach and Collaborations), MPower; and Ms Urmila Chowdhury, ex-Vice Principal, The Shri Ram School also shared their perspective at the event.

