

# Arogya World urges employers 'to do more' to tackle mental health issues of employees at the Workplace

**16 November 2018, Bangalore** – Arogya World India Trust, a non-profit organisation, today urged employers to recognise and address mental health issues of employees at the workplace. It stressed the need for companies in India to commit to doing more to help their workforces cope with mental health conditions such as stress, anxiety, depression and other mental disorders.

India is a young country with two-thirds of the population less than 35 years old. Currently in the age group of 18- 35, the third leading cause of death is suicide. 4 out of 10 professionals suffer from depression or anxiety. The rate of anxiety and depression has increased by 45- 50% in the last 8 years.

Various studies have proven that mental health issues have a substantial impact not only on the health of individuals but on productivity of the organisation as well. Unfortunately, stigma surrounding mental health, along with fear of being viewed differently, or even losing their job are reasons why employees don't talk about stress or anxiety at the workplace. And with people spending longer hours at work it is the employer's responsibility to more. Arogya also stressed the need for top management to implement interventions such as confidential counselling, stress reduction interventions and employee assistance programs to help employees overcome mental health issues.

Present during the event, **Nalini Saligram, Founder & CEO, Arogya World**, said, "We encourage companies in India to come up with supportive HR policies and ways to encourage employees to speak up and seek treatment. The health of your workforce and of your company demands this. Nothing less than the future and competitiveness of India is at stake."

Arogya also recognised 15 progressive companies as Healthy Workplaces for 2018 and felicitated them during a ceremony on November 14, 2018. These companies were recognized for their emphasis on chronic disease prevention in the workplace setting. On November 15 there was a session on Mental Health in the workplace, to highlight the seriousness of the issue and encourage companies to tackle mental health at the workplace.

Speaking on the occasion, **Dr. Pratima Murthy Professor, Dept. of Psychiatry & Chief De-addiction Services – NIMHANS** said, "The employees today suffer from various mental conditions like depression, anxiety and too much stress. Not only is this affecting their professional lives, but also their personal lives. I commend the efforts of Arogya World India Trust for taking up this issue. It is time employers take it seriously and work to improve mental health of their workforce. After all there is no health without mental health"

**Ms. Sunita Cherian, Senior Vice President – Corporate Human Resources, Wipro Limited**, was also present for the event, she said, "Mental well-being is a serious but under-recognized health issue. This assumes relevance for India's young population among whom depression and suicide are unfortunately on the rise. Wipro recognizes the importance of mental well-being and the gravity of the situation. Our efforts at inclusion extend to creating a workplace environment that is devoid of stigma and is sensitive to mental health, where employees can seek timely and appropriate help. We promote this through our people policies that make counselling and care accessible to our employees."

**About Arogya World:**

Arogya World India Trust works hard to prevent non-communicable diseases, NCDs diseases like diabetes, heart disease, cancer and chronic lung diseases – through health education and lifestyle change. Arogya World works closely with corporates for chronic disease prevention and mental health awareness because work is where so many people spend a large part of their day.

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