

Press Note
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Unmukt Organises Panel Discussion to Spread Awareness on World Alzheimer's Day

22 September 2020, New Delhi: To generate awareness around Alzheimer's, Unmukt – The Senior Hub, organised an online panel discussion, on the occasion of World Alzheimer's Day. The day, observed worldwide on September 21, is an attempt to spread information and dispel myths around this neurological disease. According to the World Health Organization, around 50 million people have dementia and Alzheimer's may contribute 60 to 70 percent of cases. Nearly 10 million new cases of dementia come up every year.

"It's sad that we don't see many hospitals organising awareness camps or memory clinics around dementia. I see so many webinars around subjects like diabetes or heart issues, but rarely anything on mental health. This webinar was our small attempt to spread awareness among seniors about Alzheimer's. We have to make people disassociate with the stigma attached to it so that patients can receive quality care at an early stage," said Monimita Sarkar, Founder, Unmukt-The Senior Hub.

Alzheimer's, is the most common form of dementia, which causes problems with memory, cognitive skills, and behaviour. One of the biggest roadblocks with treating the condition has been the difficulty in diagnosing it. "From 1996, when it first started to be spoken about to now, we have come a long way. There's been a gradual shift in people's behaviour towards dementia but we still have a long way to go," said Dr Radha Murthy, managing trustee, Nightingales Medical Trust, a Bengaluru- based NGO working for the elderly. Dr Murthy, one of the panel members, spoke about the need for more government participation as caregiving for dementia patients is expensive. "There are 5.2 million people in India suffering from dementia and we have just about 1500 to 2000 beds for them," said Dr Murthy.

Dr Sushma Chawla, founder president of Hope Ek Asha, a NGO working on offering care for Alzheimer's and Dementia patients, stressed on how misconceptions around the condition lead to late intervention. The panelists highlighted the importance of early intervention as Alzheimer's is a progressive disorder with no cure. "But early diagnosis can help in quality care," said Dr Chawla.

Often the biggest misconception around Alzheimer's is that it is hereditary. Another myth is how all kinds of memory loss is clubbed under Alzheimer's.

"Memory loss is just one of the symptoms. Alzheimer's is a gradual decline of cognitive functions. Even though there's no cure we can keep our seniors happy and help them in active ageing. For instance loneliness is one of the biggest contributors to declining mental health," said Neha Sinha, CEO, Epoch Elder Care. Epoch Assisted Living Homes are in Delhi NCR and Maharashtra.

Dementia can be stressful for the families of affected people and their caregivers. At Unmukt, the aim is to create awareness around issues effecting senior through such webinars and talks.



About Unmukt- The Senior Hub

Established in 2018, Unmukt – The Senior Hub, is a comprehensive platform which brings together, the entire senior community. Unmukt aims to create awareness, in addition to, deliberating and discussing issues relating to seniors that encompass health, technology, caregiving, lifestyle & recreation, independent & assisted living and financial management. In the pre-COVID world we held events, exhibitions and seminars in an effort to create an ecosystem of support and empowerment to the senior segment. Currently through our four online formats -- Unmukt Bytes, Unmukt Cuts, Unmukt Blogs and Unmukt Webinars – we address a wide range of issues related to different aspects of senior life. Visit us at [Unmukt- The Senior Hub](https://www.unmukt.in) or follow us on Facebook to be automatically notified on the latest updates.

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