DemClinic - India's First Online Memory Clinic launched to mark World Alzheimer's Day

World Alzheimer's Day 2021, Bengaluru. Alzheimer's and Related Disorders Society of India (ARDSI) Bangalore Chapter, in collaboration with Nightingales Medical Trust, launched DEMCLINIC, an expert-led online screening platform for dementia. This unique online memory clinic was launched by **Dr. Pratima Murthy, Professor of Psychiatry and Director – NIMHANS**. This virtual cognitive assessment platform, considered to be the first of its kind in the country aims to provide timely diagnosis and post-diagnosis support for dementia.

Dr Pratima Murthy said, "The launch of DemClinic is a great service to a lot of people. It is terrible to see a highly placed professional gradually lose their faculties, especially in the area of memory. It's very distressing". More than 5 million people in India live with dementia. "Life span has gone up causing a greater number of people to have dementia", she said.

Memory screening for senior citizens with memory issues, interactive videoconferencing with medical experts for diagnosis of dementia and its management, access to information on care services available across the country and periodic follow-ups are some of the services that will be provided through the Demclinic platform. While the memory screening by psychologists would be available free of cost, there would be nominal charges for consultations with medical experts.

"Dementia is a neuro-degenerative disorder with a devastating impact on the person affected and the care-givers. There is no specific treatment for it" said Dr. Radha Murthy, President, ARDSI Bangalore Chapter and Co-Founder of Nightingales Medical Trust. "Dementia contributes significantly to morbidity, disability, and mortality among those who are affected", she added.

"Current services available for dementia are inadequate. Around 90% of people with dementia remain undiagnosed. A dearth of memory clinics and mental health professionals make the scope of early diagnosis and intervention minuscule" said Premkumar Raja while speaking at the launch. "People receiving the diagnosis do not have access to quality care, treatment services, and support systems. Covid-19 has made dementia diagnosis and support crises even bigger. DemClinic initiative is an effort to alleviate some of the gaps between needs and services", **said Mr. Raja.**

As per the Dementia India report 2020, 5.3 million people above the age of 60 have dementia in our country. The numbers are expected to double in 20 years. In Bangalore, it is estimated that over 46,000 elders are suffering from Dementia.

As part of the event, an interactive panel discussion on Dementia was also organized in collaboration with Nightingales Medical Trust, NIMHANS, Baptist hospital, and Apollo hospital. Experts briefed the participants comprising of medical experts, psychologists, nursing professionals and students on various aspects of Dementia ranging from signs & symptoms, differentiating between age-related cognitive decline and dementia, early diagnosis, recent medical advancements, management of comorbidities as well as risk reduction followed by a Q&A session.

While a large number of people participated in the event following all COVID safety protocols, many others were able to witness and participate in the launch event LIVE online.