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ASIA EDITION

Abbott introduces new digital service in India as part of its global a:care program

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New, holistic service provides a broad variety of health information and services to support people as they try to achieve better health.



The global healthcare company Abbott has announced the launch of its new digital health service in India as part of its global a:care program. The a:care platform from Abbott's pharmaceuticals business provides doctors and consumers with services and information to help people achieve better health. India is the first country in which Abbott launched the digital platform, which can be found online at www.acare.co.in or as a web app downloaded from the Android Play Store.

Abbott's a:care is the first digital platform in the country that will bridge communication between patients and doctors across multiple therapy areas. The platform supports people with a broad range of healthcare needs, from prevention to awareness, adherence to treatment and motivation. For instance, using the platform, a doctor can get access to the latest science, medical education and patient support services, and consumers can access educational health information or participate in a motivational points-based program to help them adhere to treatments prescribed by their doctor.

"This is a transformational time in healthcare" said Jawed Zia, head of Abbott's pharmaceutical business in India. "We're seeing rapidly growing populations of people with chronic diseases in the country. The need for technology-based services that help people manage these health challenges has never been greater. a:care is an important part of Abbott's mission to help people live healthier lives."

Abbott designed its global a:care program not only to help people manage their health, but also to help alleviate some of the pressure on growing healthcare systems around the world. In many emerging markets, the number of doctors per 1,000 people is often well below the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average of 2.8. This means that doctors' overburdened work schedules can serve as a barrier to providing the best care. New technologies that monitor health, analyze data and offer personalized recommendations can be a real asset to help educate people on prevention. Thanks to emerging digital technologies that use data and artificial intelligence to monitor patients, targeted education and precise information can help people work together at every stage of a healthcare treatment plan.

The new online portal is designed to help bridge communication between consumers and doctors to ensure a supportive, cohesive approach to managing health. One example is that through the a:care portal, consumers grant their doctor access to the health information they input online, privately and securely and doctors can see patients' medical adherence reports. In the first phase, a:care will address the needs of doctors and patients, while pharmacists will be included at a later date. The digital platform currently includes three specialty areas, namely diabetes, thyroid and osteoarthritis, with plans to include more therapies in a phased manner later in the year. Other future enhancements include the launch of a native app, interactive and

regional content, a multilingual platform and personalized health coach to better equip patients to manage their health condition.

Dr. Manoj Chadha, Consultant Endocrinologist, Hinduja Hospital, Mumbai & Immediate Past President – Endocrine Society of India, while speaking at the a:care launch event, said, "Digital technology is playing a growing role in increasing disease awareness amongst patients. By providing scientifically validated information and access to advice from qualified experts, a:care will help combat misinformation and debunk myths. This enables physicians to have high-quality engagement with patients, which can drive better outcomes."

Dr. Ram Chaddha, Consultant Spine Surgeon, Lilavati Hospital, Mumbai & Past President – Association of Spine Surgeons of India further added, "A platform such as this helps us in remaining connected with our patients once they have left our clinic, so that we can help them with adherence and clarity on their condition. This helps in long-term management of chronic diseases that need continuous monitoring. Further, with our busy schedules, a:care is a good reference for medical and scientific literature, which is critical to our work."

a:care for Doctors

Through the a:care online platform, doctors can access scientific information, virtual learning tools and education-based games. Doctors can learn from top local and international experts, ensuring they have the most accurate and relevant information to provide the best care for their patients. If a patient grants their doctor access, a doctor can review a patient's profile and progress on a treatment plan remotely. Or, if the patient is coming for a visit, doctors can review the patient information in advance, saving time and allowing him or her to be more engaged with patients. One of the offline components that a doctor has access to is the a:care academy. The a:care academy is a three-year, comprehensive program that aims to provide doctors with knowledge on critical topics beyond their regular classroom curriculum. It has integrated learning modules on clinical, research and allied domains and 'future ready' personal learning modules to help them deal with changing healthcare scenarios.

a:care for Consumers

The a:care platform also enables consumers to better understand, manage and monitor their conditions. The program provides guidance, information and tools to help people manage their health, and incentivizes patients to earn health-related rewards for adhering to their medication and treatment plans powered by gamification concepts.

a:care is the global brand for a range of healthcare services offered by Abbott's pharmaceuticals business. With a mission to help people achieve better health, a:care services are designed to meet a range of healthcare needs, from prevention to awareness, treatment and motivation. The global a:care program includes the new online portal available now in India, as well as other digital apps and offline solutions, such as educational kits for doctors to share with patients. a:care offerings vary by country. The services are free and not tied to any product, treatment or disease. People do not have to be using an Abbott medication to use a:care. Doctors who wish to enroll themselves on a:care can call our national helpline to request for a:care set-up.