

Sunil Gavaskar to sponsor 34 lifesaving heart surgeries totally free of cost for children from economically deprived sections of the society

02 May 2019 | News

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Legendary Indian cricketer Sunil Gavaska during the opening of Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani International Centre for Child Heart Care in Kharghar, Navi Mumbai has announced sponsoring 34 lifesaving heart surgeries. These paediatric heart surgeries are for children from economically and socially challenged sections of society and will be done over the next few months.

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The centre will treat children with congenital heart disease who are awaiting surgical intervention. It will also support and train grassroots healthcare workers and Anganwadi sevikas in basic pediatric cardiac detection and treatment, to help strengthen primary maternal and infant health services in the region.

Each year, approximately 240,000 children are born in India with congenital heart disease. Of these, approximately 40% die before their third birthday. Since expensive and sophisticated paediatric care is beyond the reach of most citizens, Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospitals chain in Navi Mumbai (Maharashtra), Naya Raipur (Chhattisgarh) and Palwal (Haryana) is India's

largest provider of totally free paediatric heart care with over 8,600 surgeries and catheter interventions completed and over 71,000 children treated as outpatients.

Speaking at the inauguration of the centre, Mr C Sreenivas, Chairman of the Sri Sathya Sai Health and Education Trust, which runs the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospitals and Centres for Child Heart Care, said: "The centres are testimony to the work and message of Sri Sathya Sai Baba and his model of Quality Healthcare, providing totally free-of-cost services, irrespective of religion, caste, creed, nationality and gender."

Speaking to the attendees, Sunil Gavaskar said, "These tiny tots are waiting for their hearts to be healed. Paediatric cardiac treatment should be within the reach of every child and every parent irrespective of financial or social status. I am pleased that Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Centre is now open in Mumbai and will provide precious life-saving service to the people."

A new cardiac medical device-cum-service was also launched by HD Medical Inc, USA. This device called HD Stethis an ECG integrated intelligent stethoscope invented by Shri Arvind Thiagarajan, the founder of HD Medical Inc. HD Medical is training hospital staff and volunteers for outreach camps in small villages, public health centres and tribal areas to use the HD Steth. This device is a smart stethoscope which uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to diagnose unidentified children with heart problems through a wirelessly connected app on a tablet or a smartphone. Mr Vivek Gaur, Managing Trustee for Heart to Heart Foundation said, "Paediatric cardiac treatment should be within reach of every child irrespective of the financial or educational status of their parents, gender, caste, religion or social and economic background.

Shri Arvind Thiagarajan, Founder of HD Medical Inc said, "We at HD Medical are committed to this selfless cause and with our global technology will always aspire to train & help in diagnosis in this noble cause of saving lives. We are sure that our easy to use, instant diagnostic technique, which uses AI, will help detect Congenital Heart Disease" (CHD) at a very early stage and children can then be operated at an earlier stage, before complications sets in.

The Sanjeevani Centres are the single largest dedicated chain of centres in the world addressing the treatment of Congenital Heart Diseases. In optimising the goal of providing healthcare at the grassroots levels, the Sai Sanjeevani Model has chosen to use the unique 'Tertiary through to Primary Healthcare Model'.

Established in 2012, the centres have completed 78,000 patient consultations, 6,771 child heart surgeries and 1,834 paediatric cardiac catheter Interventions, 71,000 child health screenings and 13,000 pregnant mothers followed up for safe pregnancies and motherhood.

Mission Statement of Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Centres

1. Endeavour to serve in greater measure the national burden of child ill-health, free of cost and to become institutions of Paediatric Cardiac Excellence for India and several developing countries
2. To develop skilled and compassionate medical, nursing and allied healthcare providers trained to collectively address the burden of Congenital Heart Disease.
3. To advocate the Right to Healthy Childhood by bringing a sharper focus on Child Heart Care, enabled by Research and Technology solutions that inform all stakeholders in the healthcare spectrum of Preventive, Curative and Educative Care.