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"In India, out of 19 lakh beds, only 1 lac are being continuously monitored"

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One of the most crucial issues pertaining to hospitals amidst the COVID19 crisis is that doctors and nurses are spending considerable amount of time in direct contact with the patients to routinely monitor their vitals. This is an unsafe practice in the current climate as they can easily contract COVID-19 from a patient. Hospitals are in need of a smart solution that can check a patient's vitals without human intervention. Bengaluru based startup Dozee is offering a solution that can be used for vitals monitoring with safety. An AI-powered Contactless Remote Health Monitoring company, Dozee has developed an innovative device useful for hospitals as they can now monitor the patients' vitals automatically throughout their stay by installing the device under the bed. The startup has also recently raised funding worth Rs 12.5 crore to expand market outreach and bring real-time vitals monitoring at the forefront of digital healthcare in India.

BioSpectrum spoke to Mudit Dandwate, Founder, Dozee, Bengaluru to discuss how the startup is helping hospitals with its new medical device.

How are you planning to enhance the concept of digital healthcare in India?

India is currently witnessing a radical shift in healthcare and hospitals are quickly adopting new solutions that can enhance their capabilities. Our solution helps healthcare service providers monitor patient's vitals remotely and continuously. Earlier, this entire process was dependent on nurses as they are responsible for checking patients' vitals throughout the day. With COVID, it has become essential to digitize this process to safeguard the nurses and doctors at the hospitals. Our product aims to eliminate this process and automate it so that when a patient is admitted to the hospital, their vitals can be monitored throughout the day, and this is supported by our AI based early detection system that can warn the doctor if there is any risk to the patient.

Another interesting use case is remote patient monitoring where patients use the device at home during recovery. In many cases, especially post-surgery, doctors recommend monitoring the patient's vitals for a few weeks. Using Dozee, one can keep track of their readings, and also share them with the doctor.

What are the challenges that you foresee in this process?

The main challenge is that hospitals have been using the same process of data collection from their patients for decades and are hesitant to move to a safer and easy system like Dozee. We provide hospitals the demo and allow them to use the device initially to gauge how it impacts their work. In all the cases, we have seen that after using the device for a couple days, doctors find it easy to accept the new process as it makes them efficient and safeguards them from infection transmission.

We have also observed that nurses usually take time to adopt new technology as they are used to the traditional processes and medical devices. Our team spends time teaching the staff about the product and how it makes their work easier. Then there are infrastructural issues in many hospitals, especially in the Tier II cities, where computers and an internet connection are not always available in the premises.

Any new tech based product that challenges the existing paradigm finds it difficult to get initial traction. We are a Made-in-India product that has been conceived after years of R&D, and our device has medical grade accuracy. This has helped us immensely.

We have currently partnered with 30+ hospitals across India, who are now using Dozee for remote vitals monitoring despite the challenges we have faced. We hope to partner with more hospitals in the coming months.

How can healthcare delivery be improved in India?

In India, out of 19 lakh beds, only 1 lac are being continuously monitored. During COVID, many hospitals have partnered with us for this very reason as they need to have real-time data of the admitted patients as spot testing is not the most accurate way to track one's vitals. It will take time and capital to make every hospital bed a step-down ICU. There is also a huge disparity between urban and rural India when it comes to access to primary healthcare. The ratio of doctors to patients is even more skewed in small towns and cities.

Uptill now, preventative care has not been a priority for most Indian people. This year we have seen how the awareness of preventative action has increased due to the pandemic. We hope that more people educate themselves and learn to keep themselves healthy and build their immunity to prevent major health episodes in the future.

Are you planning to explore the international market?

We will be looking at international markets soon, but currently we are only focussing on the Indian market. There is immense potential here for a product like Dozee. Since our product is made for hospitals as well as individuals, we hope to gain more market share in the vitals monitoring segment. We are also aiming at Tier II cities right now as the doctor to patient ratio is extremely skewered here and having our device in such regions will ensure that hospitals run efficiently by automating the vitals monitoring process.

We have recently tied up with Indira Gandhi Government Medical College & Hospital and Government Medical College in

Nagpur where 250 of our devices have been deployed. We hope to partner with other such institutions in smaller cities.

We see Dozee as India's answer to increasing imports of medical devices. We believe India is more than capable of producing world class healthcare products.

What are Dozee's major plans for 2021?

We aim to partner with 150+ hospitals in the next 12 months and increase our presence in the healthcare community. For our B2C product, we have sold 2000+ devices as of now, and plan to sell 15000+ devices in the coming year.

We are also conducting some exciting research in the field of contactless BP monitoring, parkinson's management and stroke care. We are also preparing ourselves for launch in global markets and are acquiring the required certifications for these markets.