

## ***Blue Whale Challenge: Fortis conducts awareness workshops across tricity schools***

### ***Launches 24 x 7 helpline to aid youngsters trapped by the game***

- ***Helpline 8376804102 is open to anyone who requires counselling or advice***

**Chandigarh, October 9, 2017:** The Department of Mental Health and Behavioural Sciences, Fortis Healthcare has launched a 24 x 7 helpline in view of the recent suicides and agonising experiences by youngsters and teenagers who participated in the Blue Whale challenge. Fortis Hospital Mohali has taken an initiative to launch a series of workshops across schools like Saupin's School, Chandigarh, Ashmah International School, Mohali, Gem Public School, Mohali, Vivek High School, Mohali, Kundan International School, Mohali, Strawberry Fields High School, Chandigarh, Airforce School, Chandigarh, Chitkara International School, Chandigarh.

A School Counsellor Forum is due to take place on 14<sup>th</sup> October at Fortis Mohali under the supervision of **Dr Jyoti Sharma, Counselling Psychologist, Department of Mental Health & Behavioural Sciences, Fortis Mohali.** The forum is designed to be a platform for practicing counsellors, and school teachers to be able to exchange, discuss and formulate ways of working with children and adolescents. This series of sessions is centred around 'Creating a Secure Base' in a bid to equip counsellors and teachers alike to help make the school space a safe place for the physical, social and emotional well-being of the students.

This counselling offered via the **Fortis Helpline (8376804102)** is directed at both crisis intervention and psycho-education, imparting skills to young people to be able to deal with the situation effectively. Through this helpline, the endeavour is to make help available and accessible to vulnerable individuals as well as concerned friends and family members. This helpline is run by psychologists and psychiatrists from the Department of Mental Health and Behavioural Sciences, Fortis Healthcare, under the guidance of Dr. Samir Parikh.

This helpline is available for anyone who is directly undergoing undue mental stress and anxiety as a participant in the challenge. It is also available for family members who are noticing negative behavioural changes among youngsters in their families. The helpline offers to be medium

through which people can freely open up to trained mental health care professionals and avail immediate help.

**Dr Samir Parikh, Director, Department of Mental Health & Behavioural Sciences, Fortis Healthcare says,** “While initially a 9am - 5pm helpline for individuals experiencing any kind of emotional or psychological distress, we have now begun a 24\*7 helpline to reach out to individuals who may need psychological support. We have been receiving calls both from teenagers as well as concerned parents. This helpline is geared towards intervening in times of crises as well as imparting psycho-education to help individuals and families cope with the situation. At the end of the day, media literacy is the way forward, to help people critically understand and evaluate media messages so as to not get unduly influenced by them”

In keeping with the need of the hour, the Fortis Healthcare is also conducting a series of webinars on media literacy by Dr. Parikh where schools from across the country may log in and participate.

**About Fortis Hospital Mohali**

*Fortis Hospital Mohali is a 355 bed, JCI and NABH-certified, multispecialty care hospital. The hospital commenced operations in 2001, and is today considered one of the most recognized cardiac hospitals of India. Located in the heart of Punjab over 8.22 acres, the tertiary hospital has a comprehensive team of clinicians delivering world-class patient care, supported by advanced technology. In July 2014, Fortis Hospital Mohali added the 55-bed ‘Fortis Cancer Institute’ on its premises to offer the latest and most comprehensive Medical, Surgical and Radiation Therapy modalities.*

**About Fortis Healthcare Limited**

*Fortis Healthcare Limited is a leading integrated healthcare delivery service provider in India. The healthcare verticals of the company primarily comprise hospitals, diagnostics and day care specialty facilities. Currently, the company operates its healthcare delivery services in India, Dubai, Mauritius and Sri Lanka with 45 healthcare facilities (including projects under development), approximately 10,000 potential beds and 368 diagnostic centres.*

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