

NAVIGATE



S'pore Startup OurHealthMate Brings A Human Touch To An Increasingly Digital Medical World 0

BY DELFINA UTOMO ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2015

LIFESTYLE, NEW WEBSITES



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We've all thought about it on those sick days, while waiting for your number to be called at the neighbourhood clinic. How do they manage everything? The rows of patient files behind the registration counter, systemised alphabetically — yours is one of them in that gargantuan library — and the meticulous efficiency of fixing your appointments with doctors and specialists, and arranging check-ups; it already sounds like a heck-load of work to do. Imagine having to deal with this — but for your loved ones who are living abroad.

As they say, necessity is the mother of all invention, and two individuals, Abhinav Krishna and Dr. Akash Kumar, found the need for something that would help those working overseas manage their families' medical conditions. So they co-founded [OurHealthMate](#), a Singapore and India-based startup that helps Indian expatriates around the world financially support their family's medical appointments.



They've known each other since they met in December 2001 at Raffles Junior College. Akash was in his final year at NUS and was at Raffles Institute Boarding school as Boarding Tutor, while Abhinav was just starting junior college.

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In late 2013, they launched a pre-beta version of OurHealthMate, and by September 2014, had launched the full version with automated and integrated services. Over the past year, OurHealthMate has seen strong growth figures with 66% of payers returning to book medical services for another beneficiary, and 25% of patients returning for follow up check-ups.

The company has raised some S\$900,000 in funding, including financing from angel investors, business plan competitions and the i.JAM grant from the Interactive Digital Media R&D Programme Office. OurHealthMate is incubated by NUS Enterprise, where it has leveraged upon fundraising assistance, mentorship support, legal consultation, access to business clinics and office space.

Now, they're managing over 20 people (and growing!) in both Singapore and India.

New Order

OurHealthMate is an online marketplace where users can arrange for medical checkups, a medical appointment portal to find, book and pay for checkups and consultations.. It also allows users to remit funds that go directly to the healthcare clinics they have picked — a move that the founders believe improves compliance for beneficiaries to keep their appointments.

It's a new concept and there were some initial doubts. Abhinav said, "We at OurHealthMate personally faced the problem of parents' healthcare. Our personal experience made us realise that the problem exists. The only doubt which we had was is this [a]large enough problem which should be solved. Our customer

development, surveys and numbers cleared those doubts for us.”



Image Credit: FastCompany

How Things Work

Hospitals sign up and advertise for free on the OurHealthMate platform — the more data and services they provide, the higher they go on page rankings. A user browses through the many listings and selects an appointment or arrangement that is most suited to their family members in India, and pays for it online. Abhinav adds that OurHealthMate doesn't charge any additional fees to the user paying for medical services.

“The core value of the company is to deliver with efficiency. We deal with delicate matters of long distance healthcare. Our users are away from home and are worried about a loved one's healthcare. Our core value is aligned with our service, our service stays at par so that the users get peace of mind,” he shares.

"Distance should not hinder health care"



Image Credit: OurHealthMate's Facebook page

On The Grind

A lot of on-the-ground work goes into the setting up of OurHealthMate; they've partnered with more than 15,000 doctors and 1200 clinics, and are in various cities in India. "When we started out, we met the doctors, hospital administrators and management in person. For our initial doctors we patiently spent time explaining our product and understanding their concerns. With time the team grew, this helped us in organising events for the doctors in different cities in India. The word of mouth spread and helped us get more doctors on to the system," Abhinav explained.

With patients coming in and demand rising, a ground sales team was hired in India and soon, signups with Apollo, Fortis and other large hospital chains began to happen. To stay profitable, OurHealthMate receives transaction fees from these hospitals for using their online payment gateway — just like getting a commission for a business done.



OurHealthMate wins the People's Choice Award at Asia's Top 100 Startups (Image Credit: OurHealthMate's Facebook page)

OurHealthMate, if anything, is a wonderful testament to how technology makes life easier, and also a reminder that having a human touch in this wired up world is important. Abhinav tells us that in their growth and expansion plans, and on top of adding new features, the team is looking to expand to other geographies and looking forward to providing their services to a larger crowd very soon.

On one of their promotional materials, it says, "It's all about caring for our parents". This somehow warrants some sort of reflection that as we progress with new technology, sometimes we need to be reminded about the simple things. Have the means? Always remember to give back any way you can.

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A man of mystery and power... no, not really. I like video games, cats, math rock, horror and horrible films.
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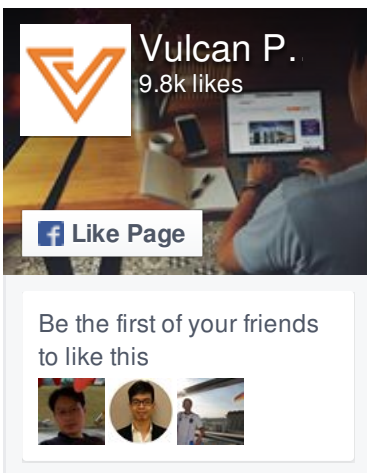
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