



Mentoring Services for Healthcare Entrepreneurship Proposal

by

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Potential entrepreneurs enroll in business schools to equip themselves with the necessary tools and knowledge to start their own business. However, no amount of theory can make up for practical knowledge towards solving the problems that entrepreneurs face when they start their own enterprises. They find themselves alone and have no one to turn to for advice and direction when they face problems while setting up their ventures. This scenario is where Mentors can and do play a valuable role.

Mentors are people who have already gone through successfully the cycle of setting up and running their own business. Mentors help mentees learn the ropes and provide guidance on issues that the mentee is facing in their business. They act as a sounding board, as coaches who provide direction and gently steer the mentee to explore new avenues of doing the job effectively. Over time, this results in positive impact on the mentee's venture. This relationship works well when there is complete transparency and trust between mentor and mentee.

Mentoring in Healthcare for budding entrepreneurs from the right role models is very essential today when the medical profession is mired in controversies about unethical practices being followed. Doctor-Patient relationships have become adversarial, characterized by one of suspicion. Perception among patients about lack of empathy on the part of healthcare providers is widespread. The practice of prescribing unnecessary tests to inflate hospital bills is rampant. The concept of Equitable Healthcare becomes irrelevant, with the hospital becoming a machine that is churning out numbers (and money) based on "bed occupancy". Hence, mentors who have set-up and operated equitable healthcare organizations and who understand the difficulties of sustaining such organizations can provide the right role models for the next generation of healthcare entrepreneurs who seek to provide equitable healthcare. Given the preponderance of overly commercial organizations in healthcare, there is a dearth of such role models today.

EHAC has as its member organizations, many that practice equitable healthcare access. The top management of these organizations have expressed interest to offer their services as mentors for aspiring healthcare entrepreneurs, EHAC's mentors have achieved great success in setting up and operating their entrepreneurial ventures. They have been able to achieve excellence on

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the two vital dimensions that are essential to ensure viability of the organizations they have created, viz., social orientation and business orientation. This is in stark contrast to most healthcare organizations in the country that focus essentially on business orientation, which is the source of the current crisis in healthcare in the country. Without social orientation, one cannot make a claim to be a responsible professional.

As JK Rowling said in her Commencement Speech on June 5, 2008 at Harvard University (Source:<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2008/06/text-of-j-k-rowling-speech/>),

‘Your intelligence, your capacity for hard work, the education you have earned and received, give you unique status, and unique responsibilities. Even your nationality sets you apart. The great majority of you belong to the world’s only remaining superpower. The way you vote, the way you live, the way you protest, the pressure you bring to bear on your government, has an impact way beyond your borders. That is your privilege, and your burden. If you choose to use your status and influence to raise your voice on behalf of those who have no voice; if you choose to identify not only with the powerful, but with the powerless; if you retain the ability to imagine yourself into the lives of those who do not have your advantages, then it will not only be your proud families who celebrate your existence, but thousands and millions of people whose reality you have helped change. We do not need magic to change the world, we carry all the power we need inside ourselves already: we have the power to imagine better.’

Dr. Rao, the Chairman of LVPEI and Chairman of the EHAC, talks about the need to recognize the debt owed to the society for all the benefits we have received, including education. The sense of repayment of this debt is what motivates professionals who represent EHAC’s member organizations to operate from an attitude of giving back, not having an ostentatious lifestyle, and forgoing profits for sustainable business models that also care about the patient’s socio-economic and other dire circumstances that in normal course would deny them access to healthcare. These mentors have come up with unique business models that help to break this barrier and provide equitable healthcare access for all.

These mentors are available to share their knowledge, wisdom and precious time at no cost to well-intentioned healthcare entrepreneurs who seek to provide equitable healthcare access, who need help on particular aspects of running their respective businesses and are not sure whom to turn to for advice. These mentors, who have been in the healthcare sector for over twenty years each, have wide networks that a well-intentioned mentee could access. They cut across various healthcare specialties and geographies in India and are renowned in their fields of expertise.

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Areas offered for Mentorship:

1. Business Model Innovation
2. Structuring the Enterprise to ensure long-term viability and success
3. Finance and Accounting
4. Leadership and Coaching
5. Systems and Processes
6. All aspects of marketing, encompassing market offering, pricing, promotion and distribution channels
7. Bringing about behavioral change both internally and externally
8. Human Resources & People Management
9. Business Strategy
10. Operational Efficiency

The overall structure of the program will be flexible, catering to the specific components where the mentee needs help. The learning objective for the mentorship will have to be defined and clearly stated by the mentee as this program will not be structured as would be the case in a training program. The mentorship that is being offered to enhance the quality of healthcare in the country to make it more equitable, will entail short stints of 2 days to 5 days to enable accelerated learning on each of the components that the mentee chooses to get inputs from respective mentors. The program will be customized for each mentee, based on specific needs of the mentee (this could be very general in the early stages to very specific as they get into implementation). It will be offered with no charge, although the mentee is expected to bear costs related to travel, stay, etc.

The modes of offering of this mentoring program will include:

- Traditional one-on-one mentoring: The mentee and mentor pair will be matched on the basis of the need of the mentee and the expertise of the mentor.
- Remote mentoring: Since our members are spread in all geographies across India, the mentoring program will leverage technologies such as skype, tele mentoring, email, etc.

It will be the responsibility of the mentee to drive the process of learning.



Indicative list of Mentors: *(this list will be expanded)*

Name	Designation	Organization
Dr. G.N. Rao	Founder	L V Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad
Dr. G. Chandra Sekhar	Vice Chair	L V Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad
Thulsiraj Ravilla	Executive Director	LAICO, Aravind Eye Care System, Madurai
Dr. Sharad Iyengar	Chief Executive	Action Research and Training for Health, Udaipur
Dr. Pavitra Mohan	Founder	Basic Healthcare Services, Udaipur
Pranjal Dubey	Founder	Sant Singaji Institute of Science and Management, Sandalpur
Dr. Chandrasekar Chikkamuniyappa	CEO & Senior Joint Replacement Surgeon	PEOPLE TREE Hospitals, Bengaluru
M.P. Vasimalai	Executive Director	DHAN Foundation, Madurai
Dr. Evita Fernandez	Chairperson	Fernandez Hospital Foundation, Hyderabad
Dr. C.S. Pramesh	Director	Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai
Dr. Parameshwar C.M.	Founder	Smiles International Institute of Coloproctology, Bengaluru
D.V.R Seshadri	Clinical Faculty	Indian Institute of Business, Hyderabad & Mohali
Dr. Rajesh Iyer	Consultant Neurologist & Epileptologist	Vikram Hospital, Bengaluru
Prakash Satyavageeswaran	Faculty	Indian Institute of Management, Udaipur

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