THE GOOD WAVE FOUNDATION

IMPACT REPORT

JAN–DEC 2023

Good Wave
FOUNDATION

Good Wave
FOUNDATION

THE GENESIS

In 2021, at the peak of the pandemic, something changed. From frontline workers to homemakers, from entrepreneurs to artists, we witnessed a community-wide need for greater mental health support.

What started as a means to give back through the '100 Hour Project', we offered 100 hours of free counselling sessions to anyone who needed it. No questions asked. Having crossed over 150+ bookings in less than 48 hours, the success of this initiative led to a bittersweet realization - there was still a lot of ground to cover and what we did, although appreciated, was simply not enough.

After months of tinkering, **in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3 which stands to achieve 'Good Health and Well-being', the Good Wave Foundation is a bold step in exactly this direction.**
To create a wave of positivity.

SOLVING THE BIGGEST PROBLEM IN INDIA?

According to the Economic Times, **1 in every 5** individuals suffers from some form of mental health illness symptoms.

There are just 0.3 psychiatrists, 0.07 psychologists, and 0.07 social workers **per 100,000 people** in India.

80% of people do not receive adequate mental health support 150 million people in India need therapy. Less than 30 million seek help.

9.3% of youth (aged 18–24 years) in India suffered from depression in the early months of the lockdown, which increased to 16.8% by March 2022.

According to WHO, the average suicide rate in India is **10.9 for every lakh people.**

Good Wave
FOUNDATION

WHY DO PEOPLE AVOID TALKING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

Log Kya Kahenge?

The stigmatization of mental illness is indeed a significant barrier to the management and treatment of mental health issues. Stigma can be understood as a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person. In the context of mental health, it often manifests as negative attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors directed towards individuals with mental health conditions.

The fear of being labeled or judged can prevent individuals from seeking help early. A study highlighted that mental health stigma, directly and indirectly, influences attitudes towards seeking psychological help and even impacts physical health. Factors like self-esteem and anxiety were found to mediate the relationship between mental health stigma and these outcomes. This indicates that stigma not only affects mental health directly but also influences how individuals perceive and engage with mental health services. Additionally, stigma can result in social exclusion and isolation for those affected.

A systematic review from Psychological Medicine focused on the impact of mental health-related stigma on help-seeking. This review sought to understand the size and direction of any association between stigma and help-seeking, and the extent to which stigma is identified as a barrier to help-seeking. The review found evidence suggesting that stigma does impede help-seeking but also noted that the field is currently not well-understood, indicating a need for further research. The review highlighted various types of stigma, including anticipated, experienced, internalized, perceived, stigma endorsement, and treatment stigma, each affecting help-seeking behavior differently.

While research acknowledges these effects, there is a need for more nuanced understanding and consistent findings to effectively address and reduce stigma in mental health care.

Good Wave
FOUNDATION

Quality Therapy Is Expensive and Inaccessible

The financial barriers to mental health treatment significantly affect individuals' ability to access and maintain necessary care. This issue is compounded by the fact that a single session is often insufficient for effective treatment, leading to a situation where ongoing financial commitment is required, which can be challenging for many.

A qualitative study exploring depression treatment access and adherence among rural Indian women highlighted the significant challenges they face. These include limited autonomy within their family structures and financial and systemic barriers, contributing to poor access to treatment and medication non-adherence. The study also identified obstacles to the use of mobile health (mHealth) interventions, such as illiteracy, limited personal access to mobile phones, and a preference for in-person clinical consultation. This study underscores the need for context-sensitive solutions in addressing mental health treatment barriers in rural India. Moreover, a comprehensive review of Indian research on help-seeking for mental health concerns reveals a complex interplay of factors influencing the decision to seek professional help. These include poor mental health literacy, perceived causal attributions of mental health issues, barriers and facilitators of professional help-seeking, and a preference for informal sources of help, such as family and faith healers. The study points out that negative attitudes, poor knowledge of mental health, social- and self-stigma, confidentiality concerns, misconceptions about the effectiveness of mental health services, financial constraints, and the lack of availability of services are common barriers.

This indicates that addressing financial barriers to mental health care in India requires a holistic approach that considers cultural beliefs, social support systems, and awareness levels.

Individuals often find themselves making difficult decisions, such as foregoing treatment due to cost, which can lead to worsening conditions. This situation can create a cyclical problem where the lack of treatment due to financial constraints leads to more severe mental health issues, which then require more intensive (and expensive) treatment.

The need for continuous treatment makes the financial aspect even more challenging. Mental health issues, especially conditions like depression, often require long-term management, including regular therapy sessions and medication. This necessity for ongoing care can become a significant financial burden for many, leading to inconsistent treatment and poorer mental health outcomes.

Overall, the financial barriers to mental health treatment represent a substantial challenge in the healthcare system. They not only limit access to necessary services but also contribute to the worsening of mental health conditions due to delays in treatment and inconsistent care. This issue underscores the need for more affordable and accessible mental health services, which would enable more individuals to receive the consistent care they need for their mental well-being.

We Need More

The lack of adequate mental health care professionals and services, coupled with the limited availability of mental health education and awareness in India, significantly adds to the challenges in addressing mental health issues. These challenges are multidimensional and have been the subject of various studies.

One of the major issues is the limited research capacity and lack of adequate mental health professionals (MHPs) in India. This shortfall is compounded by insufficient funding, inadequate research training opportunities, and a generally low priority accorded to mental health by the government. These factors create significant barriers to mental health research and service provision in the country. In terms of the overall prevalence of common mental disorders (CMDs), including depressive and anxiety disorders, India faces a high treatment gap. For example, the National Mental Health Survey of 2016 reported a treatment gap of 80.4% for CMDs. This gap indicates that a large proportion of individuals with mental health issues are unable to access mental health services, a situation exacerbated by the lack of professionals and services in the field.

Another dimension of this problem is the social stigma associated with mental health, poor awareness about mental illnesses, and lack of help-seeking behavior. These factors, along with the shortage of trained professionals and inadequately resourced healthcare facilities, contribute to the poor utilization of available mental health services across India. This situation is particularly acute in rural areas, where access to mental health professionals and education about mental health is even more limited.

The consequences of this shortage are far-reaching. Individuals with mental health issues may not receive the necessary care and support, leading to a deterioration in their condition. Additionally, the lack of awareness and education about mental health can perpetuate stigma and misunder-standing about mental illnesses, further discouraging people from seeking help. To address these challenges, there is a need for a multi-faceted approach. This includes increasing investment in mental health services, enhancing the training and recruitment of mental health professionals, and implementing widespread educational and awareness campaigns to reduce stigma and improve mental health literacy. Moreover, leveraging technology, such as telemedicine and mobile health applications, could be a viable solution to overcome some of these barriers, especially in remote and underserved areas.

In summary, the shortage of mental health professionals and services in India, along with limited mental health education and awareness, creates a significant challenge in addressing mental health issues. Addressing this gap requires concerted efforts from the government, healthcare sector, and the community to improve access to mental health care and enhance the overall understanding of mental health in India.

We decided to change India's Mental Health Scenario with the click of a button.

ABOUT THE
GOOD WAVE FOUNDATION

The Good Wave Foundation, established through a collaborative network of agencies, dedicates itself to enhancing the well-being of individuals in their professional lives and beyond. Our organization is firmly committed to offering comprehensive mental health care and support facilities at no cost and online, recognizing the importance of psychological well-being in achieving a balanced life.

Our initiatives extend to organizing workshops to reduce stress, an ever-present concern in contemporary work environments. These workshops are designed not only to alleviate immediate stress but also to equip individuals with long-term strategies for managing stress and promoting mental resilience.

Our mission transcends the provision of direct mental health services. We deeply invest in projects that uphold and advance mental health, empowerment, and equality. This commitment is reflected in our diverse range of projects, each tailored to address specific aspects of mental health and societal well-being.

Understanding the profound impact of a positive work environment on an individual's mental health, we strive to create initiatives that foster such environments.

OUR GOALS

Provide an Empathetic, Confidential Space for Free Mental Health Support:

Research shows that community and mental health are deeply intertwined. A supportive community is crucial for mental health recovery, offering a sense of belonging, reducing social isolation, and encouraging individuals to seek treatment. The Good Wave Foundation aims to create such an environment where people can access mental health support freely, fostering a community that understands and supports mental health recovery.

Extend Adequate Therapy Services to Tier 2 Cities:

Expanding therapy services to smaller cities aligns with findings that mental health therapy, including various forms of psycho-therapy, is beneficial for emotional and psychological well-being. Therapy provides a safe space for individuals to express emotions, which can lead to improved mental and even physical health. By extending these services to Tier 2 cities, the Foundation aims to make mental health care more accessible, contributing to the overall well-being of these communities.

Build a Community of Mental Health Professionals and Expressive Art Therapists:

The creation of a diverse community of mental health profession-als, including expressive art therapists, social workers, and artists, supports the idea that community engagement is vital for mental health. Engaging in community activities and receiving support from peers can significantly improve mental health out-comes. This goal of the Foundation focuses on leveraging the power of community support for mental health recovery and well-being.

Good Wave
FOUNDATION

BUT, WHY ONLINE THERAPY?

In recent decades, Indian mental health doctors have expanded their therapeutic approaches beyond traditional ones. When therapy began, a client and a counsellor had to be present in the same physical location (Murphy and Mitchell, 1998). However, mental healthcare professionals have shifted to digital therapeutic delivery methods. Since counselling is now offered via cutting-edge channels like emails, phone conversations, video conferences, etc., they embraced the change quickly.

Now let's examine the history of this kind of counselling. Even though the International Society for Mental Health Online was founded in the 1990s, online counselling, or e-counselling, was not widely accepted until recently (Callahan et al, 2012). Online mental health interventions have several benefits, including flexibility, cost, affordability, anonymity, and convenience (Li et al., 2013). Thus, it is imperative to comprehend the role that digital technology plays in the changing Indian mental health landscape. The National Mental Health Survey Reports from the WHO from 2017 state that for every 100,000 people, there are only 0.07 psychologists and 0.3 psychiatrists in India. 150 million Indians need treatment or mental health care, which is accelerating the need.

These troubling figures highlight the unbalanced ratio of licensed mental health practitioners to individuals seeking assistance. This lack of specialists, especially in a nation like India, increases the need for online assistance and widens the gap in mental health therapy. Studies have shown that counselling and other mental health treatments offered online are recognized as an alternative to in-person care and are comparable to it (Kumar et al., 2017, Chakrabarti, 2015). Furthermore, the rise in smartphone users who have reliable internet access opens up new channels for clients to communicate with therapists via chat, email, or phone calls. Online counselling is beneficial for people who have trouble traveling, such as the elderly and people with impairments, or who have trouble communicating in another language (Powell, 1998).

Another potential benefit of online therapy is that it may foster greater conversation about emotional problems while giving the impression of privacy due to the absence of social cues in the setting.

Furthermore, individuals typically answer more truthfully to computer-based psychosocial assessments, particularly those customers who experience shame or have issues that are considered socially unpleasant (Finfgeld, 1999; Wellman, 1997).

However, there are certain drawbacks to Internet counselling, including poor technology, underqualified counsellors, and problems with cybersecurity and encryption. The two most frequently mentioned issues from online practice are interpersonal difficulties and mood problems. Other frequently mentioned issues include anxiety, separation, and adjustment difficulties (Maheu & Gordon, 2000). It suggests that for mild and moderate problems, web-based therapies are preferred over more severe symptoms (Gun et al., 2011).

Roadblocks to a successful mental health intervention have been highlighted globally from the perspective of care providers, including the complete lack of verbal and visual indications online and their inability to detect non-verbal signs from the other side of the phone when calling helplines. However, the fact that online services are still thriving in addition to in-person counselling indicates that our concept of human interactions and relationships has evolved as a result of the introduction of technological interventions in the field of mental health, including online counselling and helplines. Overall study indicates that online-based therapeutic interventions yield notably successful results, notwithstanding these reservations. Additionally, the process's clients give online therapy sessions a higher rating for the therapeutic relationship than they do for in-person sessions (Luo et al., 2020). In terms of theoretical orientation, online versions of more organized therapies like rational emotive behavioral therapy (REBT) and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) may do better (Rochlen et al., 2004).

Good Wave
FOUNDATION

OUR JOURNEY

September 2022: Incorporation & Section 8 License

The Good Wave Foundation's incorporation as a not-for-profit under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013.

January 2023: Launch

On this landmark day, the Foundation launched its first reach out, introducing its commitment to providing free mental health counselling and promoting empowerment and equality.

March 2023: First Fundraiser

On the 16th and 17th of March, 2023, the Good Wave Foundation conducted its inaugural fundraiser at 91springboard, BKC, specifically aimed at supporting free therapy initiatives. This event was a vibrant showcase of the talents within our team, featuring stalls operated by our volunteers. These stalls exhibited a variety of skills, particularly in baking and arts. The enthusiasm and creativity displayed over the two-day event significantly contributed to its success, with the Foundation raising over ₹50,000, demonstrating the community's strong commitment to our cause of mental health and well-being.

July 2023: Udayan Care Workshop

On July 9th, 2023, the Good Wave Foundation organized a vital workshop titled 'Mental Health Awareness' at Udayan Care. This session, conducted by a qualified psychologist, was specially tailored for the 'Spirited Shalinis' of Udayan Care. During the 2-hour workshop, participants were equipped with essential strategies to manage exam stress and were introduced to the practice of mindful breathing. This initiative is a part of the Foundation's ongoing efforts to enhance mental well-being and empower individuals with practical and effective mental health tools.

July 2023: The Launch of Cohorts

After conducting a successful fundraising event through a bake sale, our organization embarked on an ambitious project to offer free therapy sessions to individuals in need. The initiative, spearheaded by our dedicated team, involved several meticulous steps to ensure the highest quality of service and care.

The preliminary phase focused on assembling a team of professional counsellors. This crucial task was undertaken by the Good Wave Human Resources Team, following a rigorous three-stage selection process. The process commenced with the careful shortlisting of applicants, ensuring that only the most qualified candidates advanced. This was followed by a comprehensive testing phase, designed to assess the candidates' expertise and suitability for the role. The final stage involved in-depth interviews, allowing for a thorough evaluation of each candidate's capabilities and alignment with our organization's values and objectives. Through this extensive process, we successfully appointed five outstanding mental health professionals as our mental health ambassadors.

After the empanelment of the counsellors, we conducted a comprehensive training program. This program was essential to acquaint the counsellors with the nuances of online therapy, an innovative and emerging medium in the field of mental health. The training emphasized the importance of adapting traditional counselling techniques to an online format, focusing on maintaining client confidentiality, fostering a supportive virtual environment, and employing effective communication strategies tailored to this unique setting.

With the team in place and fully prepared, we officially launched our first cohort. The announcement of the program's commencement was disseminated across various social media platforms, ensuring wide visibility and accessibility. Our efforts were met with an overwhelmingly positive response. Within just two months, we surpassed a significant milestone of conducting over 50 therapy sessions, with a steadily increasing number of applications from individuals seeking support.

Good Wave
FOUNDATION
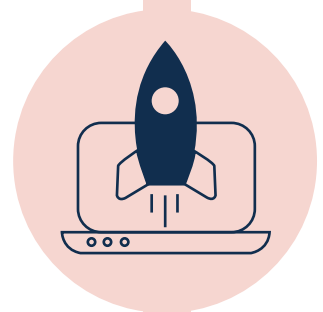
September, 2023: The Entrepreneur Cohort

Recognizing the unique challenges faced by entrepreneurs, we launched an entrepreneur cohort, focusing on their mental health needs. The necessity of therapy for entrepreneurs is increasingly recognized, given the unique challenges they face. Entrepreneurs often deal with high levels of stress, fatigue, isolation, and fear of failure, all of which can significantly affect their mental health. Research suggests that nearly half of founders experience symptoms of mental health conditions, highlighting the need for specialized support in this group.

Entrepreneurs frequently face pressure to exhibit strength and resilience, which can exacerbate their reluctance to seek help. This pressure can come from the need to motivate their team, present an optimistic front to investors, and the fear of being perceived as weak. This often leads to neglect of basic needs like sleep, food, and personal relationships, increasing the risk of burnout.

Moreover, a significant percentage of entrepreneurs suffer from mental health conditions like depression and anxiety. The entrepreneurial lifestyle, with its inherent risks and responsibilities, can lead to a neglect of self-care and mental health. Therapy can help entrepreneurs manage stress, address relationship problems, and improve overall mental health, which is crucial given the high rates of mental health problems in this group.

Therapy provides a transformative opportunity for entrepreneurs. It offers a safe space for introspection and growth, helping them gain insights into their thought patterns, emotional responses, and behavioral tendencies. This process can lead to breakthroughs in creativity, resilience, and the ability to navigate challenges with a more balanced approach. Types of therapy like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Mindfulness-based therapies are particularly beneficial for managing stress and anxiety, common issues among entrepreneurs.

The overwhelming response to our entrepreneur cohort underscored the critical importance and demand for such an initiative. The influx of applications not only validated the need for dedicated mental health support within the entrepreneurial community but also highlighted the often-overlooked mental health challenges faced by entrepreneurs. The high volume of applications reflected a broader recognition among entrepreneurs of the significant mental health risks associated with the pressures and demands of their professional roles. This response is indicative of a growing awareness within the entrepreneurial community about the importance of mental health and the value of seeking professional support. Entrepreneurs, who often face unique stressors such as financial uncertainty, high-stakes decision-making, and the blurring of personal and professional boundaries, showed a readiness to engage in proactive measures for their mental well-being.

This initiative not only served as a crucial support system for entrepreneurs but also contributed to destigmatizing mental health care in the entrepreneurial community. It provided a model for how mental health services can be tailored to meet the specific needs of entrepreneurs, incorporating strategies and therapies relevant to their unique experiences.

Since then the website has been a source of applications.

Good Wave
FOUNDATION

IMPACT

Total Counseling Hours Availed

502+ hours

Across

332 people

Services availed in

10+ cities
across 3+ countries

Jaipur

Jhansi

Patna

India

Kolk

Nagpur

Forget@098

Eluru

Chennai

Coimbatore

Good Wave
FOUNDATION

KEY METRICS

COUNSELLING HOURS AVAILED
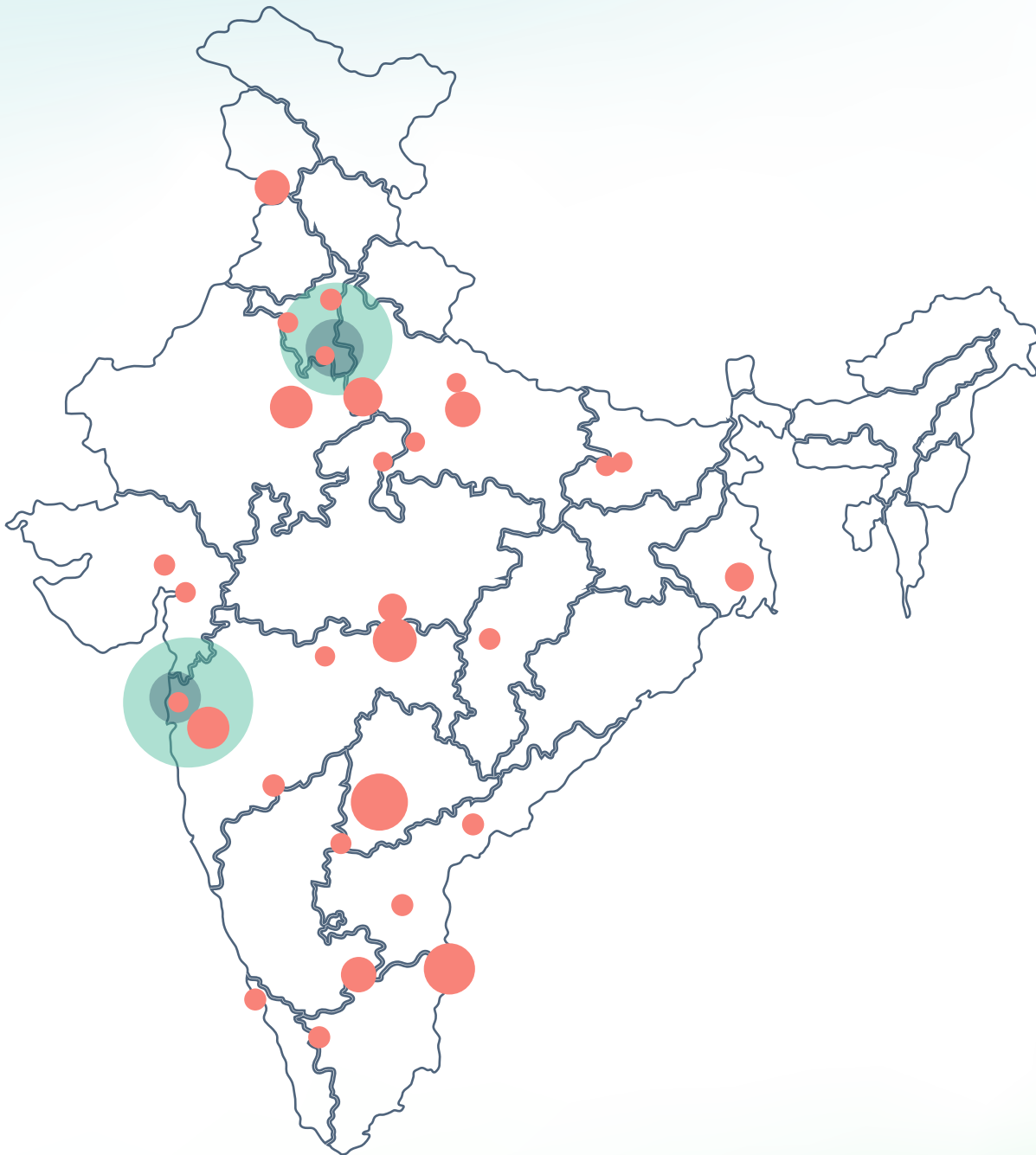

EXPENSE STRUCTURE

Staff & Management:
7%

Technology:
23%

Counsellor Fees:
70%
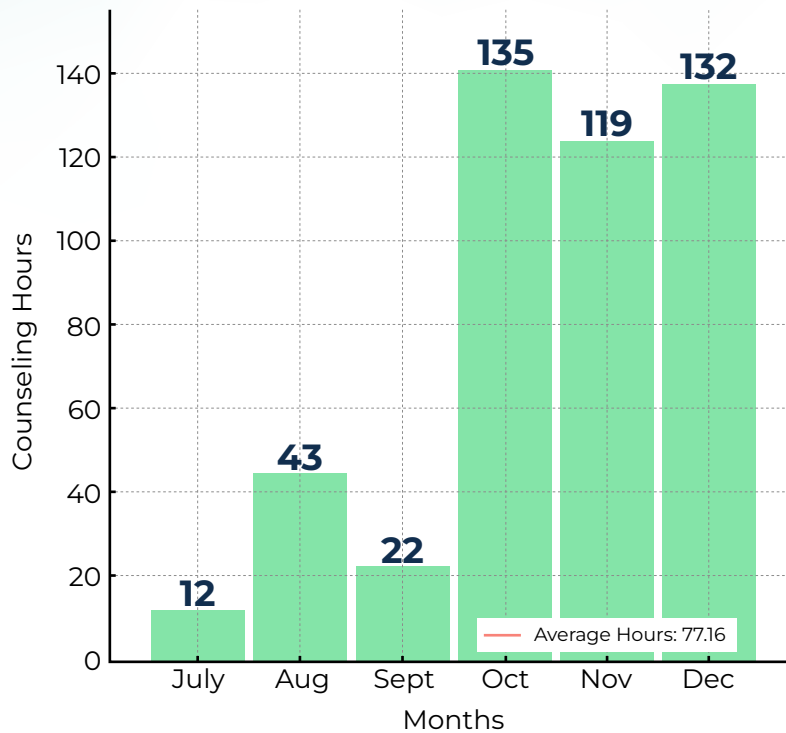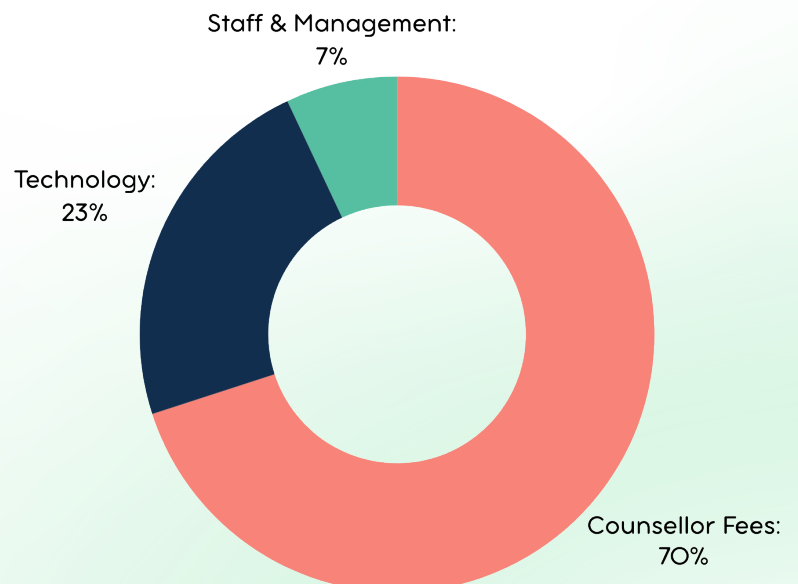
REACH

The presence of therapy services in multiple cities suggests that mental health care is becoming more accessible to a larger segment of the population. This is crucial in a country where such services were historically concentrated in major urban centers. The fact that therapy services are being availed across a diverse set of cities also points to a reduction in the stigma surrounding mental health. As people become more open to seeking help, it indicates a shift in public perception, where mental health is being taken as seriously as physical health. This distribution is a hopeful sign that as awareness grows, so does the reach of essential mental health services, potentially improving the lives of countless individuals across the nation.

TESTIMONIALS

"

It was a success and, relief and I was so glad I consulted with the Good Wave Foundation! Thanks!

Nowadays it's hard to connect with good therapists. This foundation makes it easier to connect and help to heal. Thank you for the session.

An amazing initiative by the Good Wave Foundation to help with the counselling free of cost. It helped me feel better and get awareness about the ongoing issues that I never realized before. Thank you so much.

When I first started off, I was expecting a bit of a quick fix and for the counsellor to tell me what to do next. Over time, I realized that the sessions were actually helping me figure out how I feel, identify my thought patterns, and come up with ways to cope. And it's completely worth it.

I had my first-ever counselling session today and it went great. I was kinda nervous and did not know what to expect but my counsellor was very helpful and patient with me - making me realize the things I have to acknowledge and gave me a sense of clarity. I'm hoping to have a new perspective on my day-to-day life. Thank you Good Wave Foundation.

Counselling isn't something that doesn't have to only be considered when there's a "problem". Speaking to a professional and being able to voice one's thoughts in a safe, non-judgmental space is important.

"

FUNDRAISING AND FUTURE PLANS

In our ongoing efforts to enhance the scope and impact of the Good Wave Foundation (GWF), we are initiating a strategic fundraising campaign. This campaign is designed to bolster our resources, enabling us to expand our reach and deepen our engagement in mental health advocacy and support.

As a fundamental part of this initiative, we will be mobilizing our dedicated team of volunteers, who will play a pivotal role in the fundraising activities. These volunteers, selected for their commitment and expertise, will be tasked with approaching various NGOs and mental health organizations to explore potential collaborations and partnerships. Their efforts are aimed at establishing alliances that can provide both financial support and opportunities for mutual growth in the field of mental health.

In addition to seeking collaborative partnerships, our fundraising strategy includes a series of engaging and community-oriented activities.

Looking ahead, the GWF has an ambitious vision for the future. We are in the process of developing a comprehensive workshop program that will be rolled out in various cities. These workshops are designed to provide hands-on learning and interactive experiences in mental health awareness and support. Alongside these in-person workshops, we are also planning to launch a series of webinars. These online sessions will offer accessible and flexible learning opportunities, reaching a wider audience and catering to diverse needs.

In our commitment to providing comprehensive mental health support, we are also exploring the expansion of our services to include offline therapy sessions. This will complement our existing online therapy offerings, providing a more diverse range of options to those seeking mental health support.

Through these concerted efforts in fundraising, collaboration, and program expansion, the Good Wave Foundation is steadfast in its mission to foster a more informed, supportive, and resilient community in the face of mental health challenges.

Good Wave
FOUNDATION

Get In Touch

✉ hello@goodwavefoundation.org

📞 +91 88284 39700

🌐 www.GoodWaveFoundation.org