

Cigna Foundation Global Grant Supports Crowdfunding for Surgeries in India

BLOOMFIELD, Conn. & CHENNAI, India, September 15, 2014 - The Cigna Foundation today announced a \$100,000 World of Difference grant to Samahope - a crowdfunding platform that allows anyone, anywhere to directly fund the work of doctors providing life-saving medical treatments for women and children in need around the world. The grant exemplifies Cigna's new global brand platform, "Together, all the way," as it enables Samahope to support heroic doctors in India such as heart surgeon [Dr. Sreemathi Seshadrinathan](#).

Through working together, Cigna and Samahope hope to improve the health of women and children in Chennai, India, with other areas of India to be included in the future. The grant will enable Samahope to expand into a region of India where it hasn't worked before. Additionally, Cigna professionals will lend their expertise to Samahope to help the organization conduct a community needs assessment, redesign a global giving website to expand crowdfunding capabilities, and develop measurements of success.

"The Cigna Foundation is excited by the innovative approach that Samahope uses to make a difference in the poorest regions of the world, and to grow to serve more people in need," said David Figliuzzi, executive director of the Cigna Foundation. "As India is home to Cigna's new joint venture business, our understanding of the needs of the Indian community continues to deepen, driving our desire to give back to this country."

Samahope.org is the first global crowdfunding site for medical treatments, and focuses on five surgical care areas: birth injuries, birth defects, burns, blindness and trauma. Treatments range from \$50 to \$1,000 in cost. Anyone can directly fund low-cost and high-impact medical treatments and surgeries that radically improve patients' lives through the Samahope platform. Samahope tracks every dollar, keeps donors up-to-date on where their money is going, and rigorously reports on the impact of donations on patients' lives.

To kick off the grant, the Cigna Foundation and Samahope created a [Thunderclap campaign](#) enabling anyone to make a donation to Samahope between now and October 3. Donations will help save the lives of women and children around the world who can't afford critical medical treatments. If enough people support the campaign, Thunderclap will blast out the message from all of the supporters' social media accounts at the same time, creating a virtual wave of support seen around the world.

"We're thrilled to partner with the Cigna Foundation to expand Samahope's impact. The World of Difference grant will help us reach women and children across India who are suffering needlessly. Together, we can change the lives of patients in need, restoring their dignity and livelihoods," said Samahope co-founder Shivani Garg Patel.

The Cigna Foundation grant comes at a time when approximately 800 women a day worldwide die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, with 99 percent of these maternal deaths in developing countries that lack medical facilities and medical care. Samahope and the Cigna Foundation are striving to change these statistics, and invite all who can to become part of the change.

The World of Difference grants represent Cigna Foundation's support for improving children's wellness, senior care, women's health and health equity - the four social priorities for Cigna's corporate responsibility platform known as Cigna Connects.

About the Cigna Foundation

The Cigna Foundation, founded in 1962, is a private foundation funded by contributions from Cigna Corporation (NYSE: CI) and its subsidiaries. The Cigna Foundation supports organizations sharing its commitment to enhancing the health of individuals and families, and the well-being of their communities, with a special focus on those communities where Cigna employees live and work.

About Cigna

Cigna Corporation (NYSE: CI) is a global health service company dedicated to helping people improve their health, well-being and sense of security. All products and services are provided exclusively by or through operating subsidiaries of Cigna Corporation, including Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, Life Insurance Company of North America and Cigna Life Insurance Company of New York. Such products and services include an integrated suite of health services, such as medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, vision, supplemental benefits, and other related products including group life, accident and disability insurance. Cigna maintains sales capability in 30 countries and jurisdictions, and has more than 85 million customer relationships throughout the world. To learn more about Cigna®, including links to follow us on Facebook or Twitter, visit www.cigna.com.

About Samahope

Samahope funds doctors providing critical medical care for people in need via a transparent, trusted technology platform for direct giving in global health. These heroic doctors treat patients in poor communities around the globe. Samahope connects individual donors to the doctors via its website and pools funds donated to fund high-impact, low-cost life-changing medical treatments for patients in need. Learn more at <http://www.samahope.org>.