NGO - HEALTHCARE

The journey of Online Blood Donors

APRIL 6, 2019 by Supriya Melacheruvu

The journey of Online Blood Donors rightly exemplifies this statement – a humble beginning, but what a great movement it gave rise to!

It all started in 2011, when Mr. Krishna Agarwal, then a final year graduate student, decided to help his friend in securing 30 units of blood for her father who was suffering from a tumor. Through the contacts they had and through their friends, they were able to arrange for 10 units of blood.

For the remaining 20 units, Krishna posted about the requirement on his Facebook wall. With the help of social media they could fulfill the complete requirement within 2-3 days.

Krishna saw how social media could serve the need of providing immediate help and also spotted the opportunity to serve society to meet this grave challenge. He thought, “Just 500 people in my Facebook friends list could help me meet this requirement. Imagine the immense potential that social media holds.”

This saw the genesis of a social media group “Online Blood Donors” which aims to connect blood donors with patients in need, thereby eliminating the agents in between. Krishna, who now works for the DRDO, has not looked back since then. The Online Blood Donors Group is now a very active group on Facebook, Twitter and various other social media platforms with over 42,000 followers on the Facebook page alone. According to a recent survey, a post asking for blood on their page brings in at least two donors.

Volunteers and OBD Vision

No social service organization can function without dedicated volunteers. The Online Blood Donors group has 1000 extremely committed volunteers who help in bridging the gap between the donor and the patient. The group functions in quite a few states by now, with each state having a separate volunteer group. Each volunteer group has at least five members from the core group. The core group consists of 30 members who manage and administer all the activities of the Group.

As soon as they receive a requirement request through social media groups, they first try and verify the genuineness of the patient. If the request is genuine, the team passes it over to the volunteers in that state. Each volunteer has the donor list. They contact the donors and send them to the patient. This is how the Online Blood Donors group has been successfully serving people. They have touched the lives of 1,00,000 people so far with their initiative. The fact that they could give life to so many in 7 short years tells us a lot about the spirit of the volunteers who work for this cause.

The Vision of the Online Blood Donors group is to reach the remotest of places in India and bridge the gap between blood donors and patients with technology being the medium. They also aim to educate the villagers and youth of this nation about the benefits of donating blood. In fact, the founder of the organization Krishna states that donating blood regularly energizes our body and rejuvenates it with fresh blood that gets produced thereby. The team aims to break all the superstitions regarding blood donation by organizing free medical camps in remote places and by circulating videos and posters on the benefits of blood donation.

The Online Blood Donors group hopes to expand to every nook and corner of India, especially the rural areas. They aim to make blood accessible in every village of India. They plan to establish a call center which functions 24/7 to connect patients with donors. They are also planning to develop a website and a mobile app for the same. Their expansion plans need funding. They require financial help to develop and deploy the technology solution as well as to support them in hiring full time employees who will take the mission to the remotest of places.

OBD recent reach in Facebook

Active Members during recent month

Popularity by days during recent week

Active people by age and gender

Active members by Region

Top Countries		Top Cities	
India	37,106	Hyderabad, India	23,807
United States	2,387	Bangalore, India	1,690
Australia	463	Chennai, India	831
United Arab Emirates	243	Vijayawada, India	644
Canada	219	Warangal, India	608
Pakistan	143	Visakhapatnam, India	510
United Kingdom	132	Mumbai, India	454
Germany	123	Delhi, India	339
Saudi Arabia	122	Melbourne, VIC, Australia	272
Bangladesh	116	Karimnagar, India	262

In every challenge, the OBD Group sees a lurking opportunity. They did not stop with their blood donation service. They founded and run a group called “Twitter for a cause” which directly questions the government on any issue facing society. Through this group, they have got water systems replaced, roads repaired and solved many other pressing issues. They have also helped 6 needy people in receiving financial help from the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund.

Krishna secured the second place in a drive organized recently by Radio City called “Heroes of Hyderabad”. However, his happiness lies not in receiving accolades for the work done but in making blood donation a reality over the entire nation. Blood donation is not a business for the Online Blood Donors group, it is their mission. This spirit of service to humanity is what has brought the Group so far and it will continue to be their guiding light in the journey ahead too.

Interested volunteers – please reach out on OBD Facebook Page

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