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THE founding principle of the Cardiac Wellness Institute, established in 2014, was preventive cardiology services for those lacking in India. Completing 10 years of its significant services, the institute celebrated the milestone at Taj Coromandel Chennai on Friday.

Talking at the event, Arthur Wilde, professor at Heart Failure and Arrhythmia Amsterdam UMC, Netherlands, shares, "The institute has well succeeded. Rehabilitation and prevention are important but it is not rare. In this journey, genetics is very important and we are at a very early onset of that, and with the great minds here, great work has been, is, and will be achieved."

A pioneer in preventive care, the institute was founded by Dr Priya Chockalingam with a mission of "reversal of cardiovascular diseases by compassion and a holistic approach. Founder and clinical director, Dr Priya says, "A sound clinical work and scientific research go hand in hand. The results are eye-opening and always provide room for development."

Structured approach

With the motto of heart, health, and happiness, the centre has been rehabilitating people suffering from cardiac problems. "They do get advanced treatments but the disease's root cause is not addressed, resulting in further complications in the coming years which in turn significantly drops the quality of life," she shares. There was a time when the common belief was that older men were more prone to heart related illnesses. Times have changed. Now all genders and age groups are equally susceptible. "Age has

Genesis and journey of CARDIO CARE



Celebrating 10 years of relentless heart care services | D SAMPATHKUMAR

rapidly declined because of the change in lifestyle choices and environment. We are now two decades earlier than the Western population," points out Priya.

The institute follows a multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach to treat its patients by addressing all the areas of prevention, starting from primordial prevention to tertiary prevention of the heart. In primordial prevention, people are educated on heart diseases by creating health awareness and preventing the onset of diabetes, hypertension, cholesterol problems, obesity, and addiction. For this, the doctor explains that the target audience is young adults because from the age of 20 years, individuals start to develop symptoms of cardiovascular diseases. Dr Priya says, "The American Heart Association recommends that from the age of 20 all individuals should get a cardiovascular health check done once in every five years

and after the age of 40, check-ups should be done more frequently, say one or two years."

Primary prevention is identifying people who have already been diagnosed with sickness which leads to the third function of cardiac prevention. Secondary prevention is treating the cardiac problems in diagnosed people. Doctors work closely with patients and their family members to reverse their coronary blocks. The final step, tertiary prevention is for cardiac patients diagnosed with complications.

Larger reach

The wellness institute has also published various papers proving that cardiac prevention is also an option for developing countries such as India. "We were learning the existence of possibility. Going ahead, we will work on taking this approach to lakhs whereas now thousands are benefitted," she says. Gopi Koteswaran, co-founder of Cardiac Wellness

Institute and Dzurpiv AI, talks about the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital in health care. He says, "Early diagnosis and better decision-making are a few advantages. The working of AI will help doctors detect and diagnose sooner." By digital, he refers to digitalising the healthcare system and reaching millions with a tap on their devices. This is also one of the agendas the team is focussing to achieve this year.

Dr Priya finds the future to be in a sad state because the age barrier has come down and the younger generation is at higher risk. She suggests that eating in the right quality and quantity, regular exercise, better sleeping conditions, avoiding smoking, reducing stress, and regular examinations should be the habits developed for a better tomorrow. "While career achievements and personal enjoyment are important, taking care of the heart is equally and notably important," she says.