

# Case Study

## Curofy – a Health Tech Startup



### Introduction:

**Curofy - India's largest community of verified doctors.** Developed with an objective to bridge distance among doctors and help them collaborate to solve the cases, Curofy offers doctors a spam-free and secure environment to communicate with each other. Doctors can provide referrals, share cases, call other doctors without saving numbers and have access to most recent, specialty-wise developments taking place in various fields of medicine, thus providing them a platform for collaborative learning.

### **Founders:**

- Mudit is a dual degree graduate in chemical engineering from IIT Delhi
- Nipun is a B. Tech from IIT Delhi with major in Electrical Engineering and minor in Business Management
- Pawan is a B.Tech. in Electrical Engineering from IIT Delhi.

A few sample stories :

Ehealth - <http://ehealth.eletsonline.com/2015/06/connecting-dots-medical-community/>

# Curofy a must-have App for Indian Doctors

## Hot Startup

### Curofy

Curofy is helping doctors link up with peers for cases they are unable to diagnose and treat

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**Bengaluru:** When Dr Nirav Suthar, a general physician in Ahmedabad, was approached by a 65-year-old patient with an abnormally swollen foot, he couldn't diagnose the exact cause of the problem. He posted a picture of the affected area along with the patient's symptoms on a new app for doctors and within hours got a detailed response from Dr Krishna Rao, a diabetologist from Andhra Pradesh who not only identified the disease but also listed out further investigations and the course of action.

Part of the credit goes to Curofy, a mobile platform for doctors to connect with other doctors, seek medical advice, take second opinion, post their requirements, and read and share latest news related to medical developments.

Doctors often come across cases that they encounter for the first time and post about them on the app, said Dr Mohan Kundal, a paediatrician at RML Hospital in New Delhi, who spends over ten minutes on the Curofy app every

day. "Imagine the extent of knowledge that can be shared when there are regular practitioners, speciality and super speciality doctors on the same platform," he said. "There's a great deal to learn from every case study discussed on the app," Kundal said.

Launched last year by Gurgaon-based 911 India Healthcare Pvt Ltd, Curofy already has a large network of about 72,000 verified doctors across more than 500 cities in the country registered on its platform.

Nipun Goyal, cofounder of Curofy, said more than 75% doctors registered on the platform are from Tier II and III cities. Doctors operating from individual clinics in smaller cities often find it difficult to connect with peers or access specialist medical advice. Curofy makes them part of a large community

(of doctors).

Goyal said that during their initial research for the product, the Curofy team had studied doctor's behaviour and found that they preferred to socialise within closed group of medical professionals. Taking cue from this, Curofy built an app that was spam free and allowed doctors to control access to their profiles. According to their area of specialisation and interest, doctors registered on the app are notified about cases and content published on the app.

With the largest community of verified doctors connected over a single platform, Curofy claims to stand apart from its competitors like Docplexus and Daily Rounds.

The platform also allows medical suppliers notify relevant doctors about new medical drug samples, device demos,

webinars, events and surveys. The company generates revenue through medical suppliers by connecting content-based leads to target doctors. To ensure the platform remains spam free, the team makes sure that only relevant content is pushed to doctors, Goyal said.

Curofy, which tracks medical requirements related to references, medical advice, drug samples and medical devices, can also help reduce the cost of connections — particularly between doctors and devices — in the industry significantly.

The size of Indian medical devices industry is pegged to reach \$8.6 billion, or about Rs 57,800 crore, by 2020, while the entire healthcare market is expected to reach \$200 billion, or about Rs 1,87,000 crore. A platform connecting verified doctors to new inventions will have a big role to play.

Globally, players such as Doximity and Sermo that also connect doctors through a social platform are highly valued. Doximity has raised funding of over \$81 million. Sermo, which pulled in at least \$40 million, was acquired by WorkOne in 2012.

Last year, Curofy had received a pre-Series A round of funding led by US-based VC firm RoundGlass Partners and other angel investors.

Entrepreneur Rajul Garg, an investor in Curofy, said the company has a product that "meets a very clear need." "They've already become largest network of doctors in the country and are helping solve over hundreds of cases every day," said Garg, cofounder of Sunstone Business School, who has also invested in other healthcare startups such as Babygo and LifCare.



Curofy Cofounders (left to right): Pawan Gupta, Nipun Goyal & Mudit Vijayvargiya

## Curofy Raises ₹12 crore

**Bengaluru:** Delhi-based online community for doctors Curofy has raised pre-series A round from US-based VC fund RoundGlass Partners. Backed by CEO and president of Edifecs, a US-based health IT solutions company, the investment amount is estimated to be close to ₹12 crore.

"It is challenging for practicing physicians to stay informed on the latest methodologies and

research while simultaneously connecting with colleagues to share best practices.

"The Curofy app is revolutionising digital health by making it easier for physicians to share knowledge and care patients," said Gurpreet Singh, founder, RoundGlass Partners.

The peer-to-peer app has a community of 10,000 doctors across 70 cities, including super specialists. — Our Bureau

Vccircle - <http://techcircle.vccircle.com/2015/10/08/exclusive-curofy-raises-pre-series-a-funding-from-roundglass/>



Financial Express - <http://www.financialexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/social-and-work-life-balance-for-doctors-when-saying-no-is-not-an-option/302414/>

ET Health - <http://health.economictimes.indiatimes.com/health-files/mistakes-from-doctor-human-error-or-unforgivable-crime/1610>

## A consulting room for doctors

**N RAMAKRISHNAN**

The three of them worked on a medical tourism venture while at college. They found the margins quite good, but realised there was hardly any technology involved. They wanted to create something related to healthcare using technology. That is how the three - Nipun Goyal, Pawan Gupta and Mudit Vilayvergiya - founded Curofy, a mobile platform for doctors to connect with peers, seek a second opinion, share the latest articles/literature on medicine and post their requirements.

But shortly thereafter, the three friends from IIT-Delhi went their separate ways, shutting their medical tourism business. Nipun and Pawan went to Mumbai and joined the investment and merchant banking sectors, while Mudit stayed behind in Delhi and joined a pharma consulting company. Even while they were working for someone else, the trio discussed and chalked out plans for their venture.

Over two years, says Nipun, they met various players in the healthcare sector and found out that while the stakeholders - pharmaceutical companies, medical devices makers, hospitals, distributors of medicines and devices, and patients - were online, doctors were not. It was because doctors did not have the time and they were worried that they would get spammed.

"We narrowed our focus on how we could make doctors get online and why they were not online right now," says Nipun. They continued with their interviews of doctors, meeting nearly 1,000 of them



**Curofy platform brings together pharma/device companies, hospitals, patients and doctors**  
**NIPUN GOYAL**

in Delhi and Mumbai, and found that doctors would like to be on an online platform provided they received only relevant information. Another finding was that doctors preferred to hang out with peers even after work; they even planned their family holidays with their doctor friends and their families, he adds.

Nipun and his other co-founders decided to make something exclusive for doctors and the larger medical community. This would solve all the three problems - give them more comfort, eliminate spam messages, and only throw up issues and articles of relevance to their speciality.

Initially, Curofy started off with a directory feature after which came an app that got more doctors hooked on to the platform. When they had about 5,000 doctors on the

platform, they found that a lot of peer-to-peer discussion was taking place, which was their original objective.

Curofy, according to Nipun, is an ecosystem for doctors who don't have an ecosystem they can relate to. It connects doctors with other doctors, puts pharma and medical device companies in touch with doctors. The founders put in about ₹10 lakh of their own money to start the venture in May 2014 and raised about ₹1 crore from a few angel investors. In September 2015, Curofy raised \$1.2 million from US-based venture capital firm RoundGlass Partners.

According to Nipun, Curofy gets its income from pharma and medical devices companies that use the platform to connect with doctors; they also provide content in the form of informative articles. "We have a medical team that firewalls the content and we make sure that the content is informative enough," says Nipun.

Curofy has more than one lakh doctors on the platform and apart from expanding to more cities in India and getting into smaller towns, the venture is looking at international expansion. Over the next two years, Curofy plans to have about four lakh doctors using the platform. It is also looking to raise about \$5 million, though discussions haven't started, and will strengthen the team, says Nipun.

Curofy has tried out the app in Turkey and the UAE and is fixing some technical glitches before it expands in those countries. After that, it will look to get into more countries.

NDTV startup Central - <http://www.ndtv.com/video/tech/unicorn-chasing-the-start-up-dream/the-trailblazer-of-cyber-security-445882>

Yourstory Timeline - <https://yourstory.com/2016/12/curofy-storyline/>

BW Interview: <http://bwdisrupt.businessworld.in/video/Mudit-Vijayvergiya-Co-founder-Curofy/19-10-2016-485/>

<http://ehealth.eletsonline.com/2016/02/startup-twist-in-healthcare-tale/>

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<http://www.bloncampus.com/hangout-at-bloc/socialogue/all-about-vertical-social-networking/article8528778.ece>

Yourstory - <https://yourstory.com/2016/09/curofy-growth/>

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PC quest - <http://www.dqindia.com/10-rules-to-become-a-good-programmer/>

# Self-medication endangers lives: Survey

## PILL CAN KILL

Overexposure leads to drug resistance; more time, medicines needed for cure

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**CHANDIGARH:** People are putting their lives at risk by popping pills without medical advice, claims the report of a survey done after Union Health Ministry banned 344 common drugs.

Seven out of ten people who need medical care take painkillers followed by antibiotics without consulting a doctor. Almost 40% of doctors who replied to the survey said they treated an average of one patient every week with complications arising out of self-medication.

More than 2,100 doctors across the country participated in this survey that Curofy a networking application for medical professionals, had conducted after the ministry had analysed fixed-combination drugs to contain unnecessary salts, too. "When people start self-medicating, it creates a problem not only for them but also for doctors and society at large. The problem

is that everybody in this country considers self a doctor, and they consume pills like candies, clueless about what damage they are doing," said Dr Sanjay Verma, additional professor at Advanced Paediatrics Centre (APC) of the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) in Chandigarh.

For the past five years, experts at the APC are coming across a common problem of antibiotic resistance among children.

"Almost 70% of children who report to the centre's outpatient department had either improper dosage of antibiotics or left the antibiotic treatment in between. Both are the leading causes of resistance to antibiotics," said APC additional professor Dr Sanjay Verma.

Almost 14% patients treated by doctors covered in the survey didn't respond to antibiotics, since they had been overexposed to these in the past. The result of self-medication is that

diseases are taking longer and more drugs to be cured. "Around five years ago," said Dr Verma, "typhoid could be cured in four-to-five days only with just one oral drug—Ceftixime—but now the treatment takes almost 10 days and just Cefixime is not enough. In 60-to-70% cases, we have to admit patients and inject them with Ceftriaxone and Azithromycin as well, all because people have misused antibiotics."

He called for strict ban on

the sale of antibiotics without prescription. He added that even several doctors were not using antibiotics rationally; and instead of light dosage, they recommended stronger, high-end drugs. Another PGI doctor said: "More than half of the patients referred to the institute had high-end antibiotics that were not required, which makes treatment difficult.

Dr Nusrat Shaikh of the PGI said the institute had started prescription audit in three departments and that every hospital should adopt the system. "Stopping people from self-medicating is tough but the government can discipline chemists easily," she said.

Dr Anil Sachdev director of Government Medical College and Hospital, Sector 32, recalled cases where people had self-medicated for not only cold but also high blood pressure, diarrhoea, and diabetes. He said: "Too lazy to visit a doctor early, they find it convenient to trust self and chemists."

WHY PATIENTS SELF-MEDICATE?		MOST COMMONLY ABUSED DRUGS
5% of doctors believe that patients self-medicate because of the easy availability of medicines	9% of doctors cited online availability of drugs for increase in self-medication	73% of patients self-medicated with painkillers and anti-inflammatory drugs
33% of doctors blamed "over-availability" of patients for self-medication. This could mean patients consume the medicines after reading or hearing about them	7% of doctors said that poor access to healthcare facilities is to be blamed	14% of patients popped antibiotics without a doctor's prescription