Twitter Thread by Mayank



Mayank
@AZenGuy

Haven't had a day like yesterday - trying to get dad a bed/oxygen/tests, etc taught me so much about the situation that just volunteering/amplifying didn't

There are certain lessons and tricks to this tragedy.
Sharing a thread - in case it helps someone running around for help!

Finding help - Put the message out! Twitter, WhatsApp, Insta. Wherever you think you will be heard.

Even if you think you know the resources, you need brute force of a crowd.

It's easier to validate leads and reject/accept before even calling when there's a group at work!

Following the leads -

Divide and conquer. Split a long list among 5-6 people who make calls. Everyone should have the same level of detail.

Make an easy-to-consume WhatsApp text with patient history, stats and location and distribute it liberally.

Managing duplicates -

Lots of people/tweets will have the same people, same numbers. Start seeing patterns and if you spot the same list being shared everywhere, it's likely to be very outdated/irrelevant.

A bed/cylinder is flying out in less than 5 minutes. Discard faster!

Getting medicines:

Medicines are tricky. Availability will change every minute. You need to call up local pharmacies and ask. Don't go for big chains like Apollo etc because they have crowds and tend to run out faster.

Also, smaller vendors are also likely to help more.

A small vendor yesterday offered me an oxygen can when I didn't even know he had it! That's what you need.

People rushing to you with help rather than you pleading with them and losing time.

If something doesn't work out, move on. I opened Google directory & kept calling.

Prioritizing -

Most folks I see around are asking for beds, oxygen, medicines, tests, scans etc. Some are asking for all these things at the same time.

It won't work.

I split my day into four parts: test -> scan -> medicine -> oxygen -> bed

I didn't worry about the next step till I closed the first. and this motivated me to close every step ASAP.

Tests and scans are barebones of getting help so get those out of the way. Meds are key to maintain the patient.

Use the wait time to generate leads for oxygen and beds!

A word on prescriptions here. You will need to have a valid prescription for everything! Don't try without it or with others' prescription. You will need prescriptions stating:

1. Covid test recommendation
2. CT
3. Oxygen support (+levels/volume)
4. Hospitalization
5. Meds

Now that you have the prescriptions, use them to your advantage. Drop the WhatsApp text + prescriptions to all the leads for cylinders/medicines/beds that you get and request for help.

With more information, decision making is easier and the supplier is able to help faster.

Getting oxygen -

Find out how much you will need from your doctor. How many liters per minute? This will tell you how long a cylinder will last.

Go for a bigger size cylinder if possible to reduce the refilling hassle. If you can afford it, buy two! Just in case.

Can't find cylinders?

Get a concentrator. First, check with your doctor. If it could provide interim support, find out a way to rent concentrator.

Don't rush to buy it - it's expensive and not exhaustive.

Best bet is charitable societies/missions who let you borrow.

If you can't find concentrators/cylinders - see if oxygen cans can help? Again, ask the doctor first!

Try local pharmacies - they are getting stock and quietly giving to their regular customers.

Second - call the O2 can dealers directly and ask for it!

Cans are easy backups.

How to find a bed?

This is the difficult bit. The entire system is swamped. The likelihood of getting a bed is the lowest of all the other things here.

First step: ask doctor what's needed? If it's about O2? arrange it. If it's about tests/CT? arrange it.

Build your backup.

It's expensive but life is important.

Replicate as much hospital care as possible. Speak to doctors and ask for alternatives if you can't find something. Amplify on social media whatever it is and someone might just help!

But don't stop looking for a bed! You can't give up.

How to look for a bed?

1. Amplify. Amplify. Amplify. See how many blue tick accounts can you reach with your message.

2. Divide calling lists and run through them - once in morning and then at night. Discard the lead (for now) after two refusals.

Try to increase the number of people doing the calling for you than increasing the number of places you are calling.

More volunteers will automatically ensure reaching every single option.

Also, get localites. Help mostly is next door but we don't understand the language.

I was trying to follow leads for beds 400 kms away from me without even checking if someone in my apartment knows what to do about this. Crisis makes you stupid.

Reach out to your neighbors, RWAs, local bodies - they will know the best workarounds to every single situation!

Super secret tip on beds: All the hospitals, war rooms, coordination folks work 24*7! Utilize it.

Night is when things get scary. Reduce the number of your vulnerable nights.

I used my anxiety last night to call everyone I could and asked for help. It worked.

Also: officials have less calls to attend. hospital admins have a breathing space. People are more likely to listen!

Don't abuse the system with fake outcry but see if someone who promised you in morning can deliver at night?

By 8 am, everyone will be dialing the same lines.

It sounds tragic but you are trying to be the first in the queue. You need the bed. So you need officials making calls for you.

Find out who in the local body/state govt can help you.

Better if you ask them exactly what it'll take for you to get a bed and then solve that!

BBMP told me last night that I won't get a bed till my dad's report comes. No amount of pleading can solve it since the system needs the positive/negative report to allot a bed.

I asked how to solve it.

The local body person said, get a Rapid Antigen done right away. I did.

Another tip? Make it clear to the officials/coordinators that you are okay with a private hospital bed (if you are!)

Most folks assume that all calls are for government beds so you might miss out on a private hospital bed if you don't clarify it. A lesson I learned the hard way.

If you are looking for a bed - follow up every 30 minutes with BBMP/local bodies. The beds will fly out before your call connects.

Also, be ready to move the patient RIGHT AWAY. I moved my dad at 3 am last night in 5 minutes of getting a confirmation.

Also, no matter what symptoms/stage/need --> Get covid test report ASAP. My dad's still not getting insurance because his COVID RTPCR report is pending.

Without a positive report, bed is impossible. But if you have a negative report --> ask for general illness beds/hospitals.

Okay, final thoughts.

Don't lose hope if day 1 isn't successful.

Your job is to keep the patient healthy and on a recovery path.

Ask doctors. Find alternatives. If nothing works, keep amplifying till something does.

And when it does? Thank everyone. And help others.

I am covid +ve but stable and recovering. Dad is in the hospital. My entire immediate family is sick in Delhi but stable.

And the country is in an unprecedented health crisis.

Let's look out for each other. All for one and one for all.

Text me if you need help.

- fin -

If you read till here, I have a favor to ask.

I am on a mission to help @Hemkunt_Fdn provide oxygen cylinders for free. They've done a fabulous job of saving lives.

A small contribution from us could save many, many more! Consider donating?

https://t.co/NsFaXgi6e1

> This is the most important bit. Donate here: https://t.co/4k7UOo6Eio
>
> Please. Let me know if you do so that I can personally thank you. https://t.co/Rp60Aw8bML
>
> — Mayank (@AZenGuy) April 23, 2021