

Discovery commits R1m to SADAG

Discovery this week announced its commitment of R1m to the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) Suicide Helpline.



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Discovery's support follows from an interview with Cassey Chambers, operations director of the SADAG, on Radio 702 last week. Chambers, who asked for public and corporate assistance, confirmed during the interview that SADAG would need to consider closing down their helpline for people who need support with thoughts of suicide.

"Discovery has had a long-standing relationship with the SADAG and considers them an important stakeholder and partner in the healthcare system," says Dr Jonathan Broomberg, CEO of Discovery Health. "We believe that mental health is as critical as physical health. In committing these funds, we want to show our support for their vital work, and we want to enable them to continue to save the lives and improve the health of thousands of South Africans," says Broomberg.

Helping those who feel helpless and hopeless

Chambers says, "This helpline, manned by volunteers, receives approximately 400 calls each day, and phone costs alone can reach up to R60,000 a month." She says without an official sponsor, SADAG has to pay these operational costs. "Financial assistance of this nature will go a long way to ensure we can keep this helpline in operation for at least a year and, in turn, help thousands of people who feel helpless and hopeless," Chambers confirmed.

With depression becoming more prevalent, and as many as one in three South Africans likely to suffer from it in their lifetime, awareness and management of mental health issues are critical. “Discovery has, through our Corporate Wellness initiatives, seen an increase in stress, anxiety and depression among people. Proactive support from organisations such as the SADAG, is therefore an invaluable part of managing these conditions and helping those affected,” says Broomberg.

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