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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Mental Health – *It is okay not to be okay***
Jain Health Initiative, a recently launched activity under the auspices of OneJAIN UK, held a timely and highly informative webinar on Mental Health on Sunday 14th March. Rajvee Punatar, Chief Scientist at the Crick Institute and the presenter of the program said, ‘that despite enormous efforts by professionals from many fields, mental health still remains a sensitive topic of discussion and difficult to address in our community.’

This was an apt opportunity for the four community professionals with considerable frontline experience to talk about various issues related to mental health.

Varsha Dodhia, NHS Service Improvement Manager explained that there is a stigma around talking about mental health. There is a reluctance to admit that they are suffering from mental health problem or even talk about it. She said poor mental health does not discriminate against age, class, gender or whether a person has wealth or not.

Anish Shah Founder and CEO of Mentis, a mental health non-profit, and a qualified counsellor and social worker explained how one’s ‘wellbeing’ is defined in personal terms of one’s thoughts, behaviour and actions and the surrounding external factors. He cited examples like coping with job losses a very pertinent topic in current pandemic environment.

Dr Rishi Galaiya a junior doctor and Core Trainee in Psychiatry talked about common symptoms of mental health difficulties as such as well as well as less well understood topics such as addictions and substance misuse, eating disorders and psychosis. He also touched upon self-harm and suicide.

Dr Chirag Gorasia – a Clinical Psychologist with over 15 years of experience talked about the importance of getting help and where to get the help from. He highlighted the range of aids available such as self-help books, apps and computerised programs as an initial source of help. He shared several very useful tips of staying well.

The panel answered numerous questions raised by the audience following the talks. Rajvee Punater urged everyone to view the recording via the link - <https://www.onejainuk.org/health>.
She added mental health is a sensitive topic that is sometimes difficult to discuss with others. The panellists excelled in addressing this topic with appropriate deftness and professionalism and provided a wealth of information to stay well. Ultimately, they assured us that it is, indeed, *ok not to be ok.*

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About OneJAIN and the Institute of Jainology

Since 2014, OneJAIN has been an initiative of the Institute of Jainology (IoJ), to unite all 32 Jain organisations in the UK, and present government and other faiths with a single voice to promote the Jain faith.

The Institute of Jainology (IoJ) was established over 30 years ago to promote Jainism through art, culture, and education. Today it achieves these aims through OneJAIN, the Jain All Party Parliamentary Group and the Jainpedia.org site.

For more information see www.jainology.org and www.jainpedia.org, or contact

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