



## Corporates willing to address mental health issues

**Vandana Ramnani**

The German wings crash opens a debate on whether companies in India ought to include stress as part of employee assistance programmes as is the case in other countries.

While most companies only focus on the physical health of employees, many are starting to get proactive about integrating mental health into their wellness programmes through the Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) that enable employees to seek help for depression and stress management.

“Corporate counselling is not a taboo in the West but creating awareness in India is a challenge. But things are changing and corporate managements are becoming sensitive to the issue. The period of denial is over. They are accepting that stress is an issue because competition is high,” says Ranjana Rawat, GM client engagement, 1to1help.net, a company that provides counselling services to corporates.

According to Aditya Narain Mishra, president, staffing, Randstad India, many progressive organisations are recog-

### WHAT IT COSTS

Most insurance firms have an occupational hazard rating. In cases where certain occupations are considered dangerous, the premium is more.

“Insurance premium for workers employed in oil rigs, mines, polluting industries gets rated up,” says Anup Rau, Anup Rau, CEO, Reliance Life

nising that the productivity of their employees impact their employer branding and therefore have wellness experts on board. They also track the health of their senior executives for which they have an integrated health programme that includes mental and psychiatric consultation.”

But much more needs to be done. “Companies need to take up health profiling for high-stress jobs regardless of seniority levels. Wellness initiatives can be targeted at different categories of workforce – voluntary for youngsters, mandatory at 35 years and above etc,” says Jagjit S, chief people officer, PwC India.