

Unique opportunity to care for troubled minds

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(From left) Sugata Marjit, Partha Chatterjee, Keshari Nath Tripathi, Minu Budhia, Suranjan Das and Priyam Budhia at the inauguration of the course on Monday

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Kolkata: The post graduate diploma in basic counselling, which will be taught under the academia wing of Addlife Caring Minds, was inaugurated on Monday in presence of Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi. Education minister Partha Chatterjee was also present.

The course has received affiliation from Calcutta University. The education minister hailed it as a "great initiative". "This shows that education is no more limited to traditional classrooms," he said, adding, "Addlife is not only a clinic but also a place of learning."

The governor — who is also the chief patron of Addlife Caring Minds — said the initiative was a "compassionate" effort. Calcutta University vice-chancellor Sugata Marjit assured Addlife Caring Minds of

extending assistance.

The one-year diploma can be pursued by graduates from any stream. The registration fee is Rs 10,000 if one applies before July 25, and Rs 12,000 after that date. The tuition fee has been fixed at Rs 2,500, and classes are scheduled to start from August 4.

Suranjan Das, the vice-chancellor of Jadavpur University, said: "It is a unique course."

"I envisioned the academia wing to help create more primary-level mental health professionals in this city. In addition to the basic counselling course, we provide a six-month psychometry and internship course and also a variety of short-term courses," said Minu Budhia, director and founder of Addlife Caring Minds.

"The basic counselling course has received affiliation

from CU and is a big feather in our cap. The course syllabus has been reviewed and approved by them and the diploma students receive will have validation from CU," Budhia added.

"The Indian government estimates that approximately 70 million citizens have mental health issues. This number is increasing with every year. According to some estimates, a fifth of Indian adolescents have emotional, learning, or developmental issues, while an eighth have serious mental health issues. India accounts for more suicides than any other country in the world. If we as mental health professionals do not work to break the stigma that exists in the minds of people, we will not be adequately able to help those who need our support," the Addlife director and founder pointed out.