MEDIA SYNOPSIS

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The Jakarta Post

Spire releases study on Autism in Indonesian children

To commemorate World Autism Awareness Day, Spire released its pro-bono study focusing on Indonesia’s autistic children, working in collaboration with Rumah Autis (Home for the Autistic) – an Indonesian NGO that provides therapy and raises awareness about autistic children. The first-of-its-kind autism mapping project highlighted the rising number of autism cases in children. These findings were published in The Jakarta Post – a prominent Indonesian online news portal.

Autism – a complex developmental disorder – is on the rise in Indonesia. As more children are diagnosed with this condition, Indonesia needs to provide more affordable therapy centres and schools. According to the findings of the study, over 139,000 children (under the age of 17) suffer from this condition – with 25,000 children in West Java alone.

These children often do not receive adequate medical attention due to the uneven distribution of therapists and high costs. The findings reveal that each child with Autism requires 6-10 sessions of therapy per week costing IDR50,000 - 250,000 per session – which is expensive.
At the same time, inclusion schools are another option. The School Inclusion Program (launched in August 2004) was an initiative to make education accessible for all children, especially those with disabilities. The success of this program is evident from the fact that the number of inclusion schools in Indonesia saw a 1000% increase over the last six years. However, this has not been accompanied by a commensurate increase in human resources to treat autistic children.

Spire’s report recommends integrating autistic children into the society, by enabling them to attain educational milestones and become employable in sectors such as hospitality and public service.

Click here for the official coverage on The Jakarta Post’s website.

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For media enquiries, please contact:
Nidhi Singh
Assistant Manager, Group Corporate Communications
Spire Research and Consulting
Phone: (91) 124 646 5499
E-mail: nidhi.singh@spireresearch.com