

THE Healthcare Insights

Your Guide to Healthcare

10 MOST INFLUENTIAL HEALTHCARE ENTREPRENEURS TO WATCH IN 2021

Riya Shah

Dedicated to Addressing the Challenges around Pregnancy through Innovative Solutions



Founder and President, Fetal Life LLC.

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Success can come at any age. It's never too early to become successful. While many wait until they are old and grey to find their full potential, some get a winning idea at a young age and actively work on it and create their own success stories. Such young brains prove that age is no bar and an innovative mind and the indelible will to turn a vision into a reality are enough to make a business a big success. One such highly driven young entrepreneur who founded her own company as a 15-year old freshman in high school and received her first patent for the portable smart uterine contraction monitoring device she designed and developed is Riya Shah, the Founder and President of Fetal Life LLC.

Growing up, Riya has always loved the challenge of problem-solving and thinking out-of-the-box. In 9th grade, she learned about the emotional and financial stresses of false-positive contractions that her mother had to go through before her birth. This inspired her to create a mobile app that can mitigate this issue by helping women measure their contractions and make better-informed decisions. She designed and developed a patented medical device called myContractions which allows women to capture the frequency and duration of their contractions data at home and view the data on a paired mobile app. This data can be shared remotely in

real-time with a physician to make informed decisions about labor. In 2017, Riya founded Fetal Life LLC, a specialized technology company for addressing the challenges around pregnancy by the integration of medical expertise, artificial intelligence, and technological solutions.

Helping Pregnant Mothers Better Manage Their Health

Fetal Life is a healthcare company that provides solutions to offer holistic care throughout the entire pregnancy journey and during the postpartum period. Fetal Life has a novel and patented contraction device that is portable, affordable, and easy to use. It can be paired with a smart mobile phone or tablet which enables pregnant women to measure their contractions at home in real-time and share the contraction information remotely with healthcare providers. Fetal Life also has a mobile app called myFetalLife that enables the self-management of health. Furthermore, Fetal Life's solution provides a telemonitoring platform for nurse-managed care and a telemedicine platform for physician-managed care.

According to CDC, the early recognition and management of pregnancy complications and the continuous monitoring of the pregnancy by healthcare providers are essential in ensuring healthy, positive outcomes for expectant mothers and in reducing the risk of mortality. Fetal Life recognizes this statement to be the key to safer outcomes and its solution allows pregnant women to be remotely monitored

by healthcare providers, helping extend pregnancy care beyond clinical walls and promoting improved outcomes.

"The Fetal Life solution is also especially useful for high-risk pregnancies and pregnant women facing access to care issues since our platforms and products allow for monitoring and sharing health vitals and contraction data in an efficient, automated manner. Fetal Life is passionate about serving the pregnant community because healthy moms mean healthy babies," asserts Riya.

Attributes that Differentiate Fetal Life

Fetal Life's holistic care solution is unique and foresees numerous opportunities in the pregnancy space. Though many companies are operating in this space, most of these companies as of now don't have a combination of their own patented device, telemonitoring platform, and telemedicine platform, which differentiates Fetal Life from these companies. Its devices are affordable, portable, easy-to-use, and clinically proven. Looking at the growing need for telemonitoring and telemedicine services in the wake of the pandemic, the Fetal Life solution facilitates the real-time sharing of health assessments, contraction data, and fetal heartbeat data with healthcare providers, regardless of location. "With the Fetal Life solution, pregnant mothers can get care right at their fingertips. Overall, the Fetal Life solution provides cost savings for the customer, improves outcomes, and is greatly impactful in promoting healthier pregnancies and thus healthier babies," affirms Riya.



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Conquering the Challenges along the Way

Speaking of the key challenges Fetal Life had to face during its journey, Riya adds, "Being an innovative company and a disruptor in the pregnancy space has its own challenges. Introducing devices in a space, especially in a highly controlled and regulated healthcare industry, requires patience. Also, the time from ideation to go live is very long, requiring dedication to keep pursuing the path to perform clinical trials, prove the overall concept, align with healthcare providers, and keep evolving. This requires a lot of patience, hard work, and funding. I had to continuously keep raising funds, which at times takes away the focus from operations to fund raising every now and then."

The company also faced business scaling challenges during the early part of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the pandemic fueled a need for services like telemonitoring and telemedicine. During the pandemic, with most people adopting social distancing norms and pregnant mothers unable to visit their physicians due to safety concerns, Fetal Life's telehealth features, and solution overall, became especially impactful in effectively monitoring pregnant mothers' health remotely in between routine physician visits while keeping mothers safe from potentially getting infected.

"The entrepreneurial journey is a rollercoaster with ups and downs. My mentors remind me frequently that patience is the key to entrepreneurship. Each step in the process can take time or can pose setbacks, but it is important to be patient and persevere through these challenges. These 'downs' eventually will turn into 'ups,'" states Riya.

Poised to Reach a New Height

For Riya, there is nothing more difficult yet so fulfilling than turning dreams into realities, and entrepreneurship allows just that. She believes that being an entrepreneur is a rewarding experience that not only shapes one's identity but eventually becomes ingrained in it. The ardent entrepreneur attributes her success to her family team members, and mentors who always supported her and believed in her. Currently, Riya is biomedical engineering student and a Stamps President's Scholar at Georgia Tech. After completing her degree, she sees herself managing her company full-time and taking it to new heights.

"Fetal Life holds a special place in my heart. It always puts a smile on my face knowing that Fetal Life's solution is helping make pregnancy a safer and more positive journey. Through my passion for technology and innovation, I want to keep helping improve health outcomes and quality of life," concludes Riya.