

## Press release

**August 28, 2020**

### **India needs a National Program to Control Chronic Lung Diseases (COPD)**

**NEW DELHI – August 28, 2020** – The International Institute for Human Development, India (IIHD India) and Indian Association of Respiratory Care (IARC) organized a live seminar to deliberate on why India is not responding adequate enough to the challenge of containing Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). The deliberation covered a wide range of access related issues of diagnosis, treatment and management while addressing what India required now and in future to tackle COPD.

*“The seminar brings together policymakers, pulmonologists, anesthesiologists, respiratory therapists, civil society organisation, academia and research institutions across pan India representing Apollo Hospital, CMC Vellore, Fortis Hospital, National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, Amritha Institute of Medical Sciences and Research Centre, Manipal Hospital, Indian Council of Medical Research, AIIMS, D Y Patil Hospital, Bharathi Vidyapeeth University and many more”,* said Dr. Sandeep Bhatia, Director, Healthcare Value, Policy & Strategy, IIHD India.

*“The vibrant session were organized in the presence of eminent speakers starting with Dr. Sundeep Salvi, Director, Pulmocare Research and Education Foundation, Pune, followed by Dr Damodar Bachani, Former Deputy Director General, MoHFW, Government of India, Dr. Rajesh V, Head Department of Pulmonology, Rajagiri Hospital, Kochi, Dr. Pradeep Joshi, National Program Officer, WHO India and Dr. P. A. Mahesh, Professor JSS Hospital, Mysuru”,* said by Ms Madhuragauri Shevade, Associate Vice President, Indian Association of Respiratory Care.

*“India need to adopt a multipronged approach involving the reduction of risk factors, improving availability of healthcare personnel, implementation of standard treatment guidelines, an efficient referral mechanism, rehabilitation programs, and effective surveillance systems. India needs a National COPD prevention and control program”,* emphasized by the Seminar moderator and an eminent expert Dr. Sundeep Salvi, Director, Pulmocare Research and Education Foundation.

Dr. Damodar Bachani said, *“Though for COPD was included under the National Program for Prevention and Management of Cancer, Diabetes, CVD and Stroke, however, limited emphasis has been given at the primary level as compared to diabetes, hypertension and some cancers. It is recommended that COPD prevention, diagnosis and management may be given due attention within the framework of national program. In addition, cross referrals between Revised National Tobacco Program (RNTCP) and NCD programs should be facilitated for effective delivery of the program”.*

Dr. P. A. Mahesh, Professor JSS Hospital, Mysuru highlighted, *“There are some of the excellent initiatives by Government of India which are working well for COPD management such as regulatory control on prices to make COPD management affordable for most patients, banning smoking in public places, India’s Prime Minister, “UJJWALA” scheme and Kerala’s SWAAS program”.*

Dr. Rajesh V, Head Department of Pulmonology, Rajagiri Hospital said, *“India needs to give emphasis on spirometry diagnosis, impart quality trainings, focus on rehabilitation and establishment of COPD core team with central role for pulmonologist to tackle COPD”.*

Dr. Pradeep Joshi, National Program Officer, WHO India emphasized, *“Multisectoral actions to reduce risk of COPD, which includes various government initiatives on Tobacco control, supply of LPG through Ujjawala scheme, controlling air pollution, use of safer sources of energy including Solar energy”.*

*“With the increasing incidence of COPD in India and the burden it puts on the health care system it is obvious that the physician and the health department is being hard pressed to meet the requirement of the individual patient. The burden on the patient and the family is even worse. It is also important to realize that the disease is chronic in nature and once labeled as COPD they remain a patient for life. A proper follow up with timely interventions will most definitely improve the quality of life and reduce the morbidity and mortality in these patients. The qualified Respiratory therapists with their knowledge of the disease and their skill in aiding diagnosis, evaluation, and management of this group of patients in the outpatient setting, wards, ICUs and even in their homes can be a great help in reducing the burden on the physicians and also the distress of the patient and family. In addition, Respiratory therapists can play a key role at the national level and contribute immensely to address the challenges of COPD. Properly utilized, the Respiratory therapist will be a great asset to the national health care system”,* said Dr Jerry Paul, President, Indian Association of Respiratory Care

*“The COVID-19 pandemic has put patients with COPD and other comorbidities at a high risk for poor outcomes. Access to care is a key issue for patients. Hence, this seminar comes in response to recognizing the urgency of this issue and collaborates for understanding what is not working well and why, while translating national strategic plans into concrete action at grass root level. The patient engagement for proper utilisation of the healthcare units must be warranted by multiple stakeholders in the healthcare value chain for an effective COPD management”,* said Dr Ruchi Sogarwal, Founder & CEO, IIHD India.

### **About International Institute for Human Development (IIHD)**

The IIHD India is a not for profit organisation committed for social impact, helps in supporting ideas, people and organizations in transforming their vision into reality. IIHD believes that strengthening ecosystem partnership is the most essential strategy for long-term and sustainable social impact, hence, the organization work as catalyst and aggregator to connect with/within Government, NGOs, corporate and professional associations, and academia and research institutions for skills/talent and solutions, primarily in healthcare and education sector. For details: <http://iihdindia.in>

### **About Indian Association of Respiratory Care (IARC)**

an organization for the young and dynamic Respiratory Therapists in and around India. IARC endeavors to promote excellence in the training and practice of Respiratory Therapy by competent and qualified respiratory therapists for the alleviation of suffering of those with respiratory ailments. The association has a strong presence in India as well as abroad with more than 1000 Respiratory Therapists and counting. IARC also has its official journal, The Indian Journal of Respiratory Care (IJRC), that publishes research papers in Respiratory care, respiratory therapy and is read widely by respiratory therapists and all health care personnel dealing with respiratory care including pulmonologists, intensivists, anaesthesiologists, physicians, physiotherapists and critical care nurses. The association has a strong advisory board which includes professional from Anaesthesiology, Pulmonology, Internal Medicine, Intensive Care, Cardiology and Paediatrics. For details: <https://iarc.in/>

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