

Pharma experts address quality as a critical issue

06 June 2018 | News

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(L-R) Dr. Ajit Dangi (President & CEO, Danssen Consulting), Deepshika Jakate (Regional Quality Head-South Asia, GSK Pharmaceuticals Ltd), Ashwani Sood (Sr. Director- Industrial Affairs, Sanofi India Ltd.), Annaswamy Vaidheesh (President, OPPI), Deepnath Roy Chowdhury (President, IDMA), Dr. Sanjit Singh Lamba (Managing Director, Eisai Pharmaceuticals) and Jaidev Rajpal (Partener, McKinsey)

Government officials, industry representatives, industry associations and patient groups met recently to address quality in the pharmaceutical industry. India's reputation as 'Pharmacy to the World' makes it incumbent upon us to achieve the acceptable quality standards across the entire value chain, from R&D to the point it reaches the patient buying medicine from the pharmacy.

In collaboration with the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, all the major industry associations, viz, the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA), the Indian Drug Manufacturers Association (IDMA) and the Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) participated in a Quality Summit to set an agenda that would:

- Align on the importance of setting and adopting best-in-class global quality standards for the pharmaceutical industry;
- Bring all stakeholders together – regulators, industry and governments, both state and central – to create the enabling conditions for achieving this goal, and
- Define the quality roadmap for India

The gamut of issues covering quality, ranging from labelling to packaging and storage, were discussed at the summit. According to a 2015 study by the Uttar Pradesh Department of Food Safety and Drug Administration, 38 percent of medicines are not effective because of low quality. This highlights the need for a baseline quality standard across the spectrum from the laboratory to the market.

Commenting on the deliberations in the Quality Summit, A. Vaidheesh, President, OPPI said. "Quality is the differentiator and a key factor in competitive advantage. It is a continuous journey, not a destination. We have to keep working at it in sustained

fashion. Quality of medicines are pivotal in delivering patient care and the entire pharmaceutical industry has come together to stress the importance of quality in delivering responsible and safe patient care."

Deepnath Roy Chowdhury, National President IDMA, was also categorical in his position on the importance of quality medicines in India. "Our industry has taken the lead in pledging support towards making global quality medicines," he said. "We will do our utmost in maintaining our country's leadership in providing quality affordable medicines and ensure that Indian Pharmaceuticals continues to be the Nation's Pride".