

Health Meets Hope at OPPI Health Dialogue 2019

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Research papers released: 'Role of Healthcare Financing in improving access to state of the art treatments', a PwC-OPPI study & 'Leapfrogging India's Health Outcomes', a BCG-OPPI study



The OPPI Health Dialogue 2019 held in the nation's capital saw its mission 'Health Meets Hope' focus on the convergence of regulations, financing, technology and advanced pharma science to realize the true healthcare potential for patients across the country.

The Health Dialogue 2019, curated by the Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI), witnessed policy makers, regulators, global experts, patient groups and members of the healthcare and pharmaceutical industry coming together to discuss the need to build an inclusive healthcare ecosystem, with patient well-being at the core. A key initiative announced on the occasion was the launch of a nationwide digital campaign, #RefreshingResearch, across pharma colleges in the country to highlight the role of science and research in improving patient lives.

Kanchana TK, Director General, OPPI said; "The research-based pharmaceutical industry is proud to be playing its part in the quest to find effective and sustainable solutions to today's most pressing health concerns. Thanks to the innovative medicines developed by our member companies, patients all over the world are living longer, healthier and more productive lives. #Refreshing Research, OPPI's digital campaign to be launched shortly aims at engaging younger minds, thus enabling them to be ambassadors for Science and Research. It aims at building a community of researchers who are not afraid to take that one brave step into the dark blind alley and come up with solutions that are not merely confined to addressing problems, but come up with treatments and cures that were hitherto unknown."

Beginning with the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPERs), under the aegis of the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, #Refreshing Research proposes to initiate an inter-collegiate competition among pharma colleges across the country. The contest will encourage participants to come up with innovation/incremental innovation in any of the following areas: Women's health; Public Health – AMR & Vaccines; Mental Health; Supply chain management and Sustainability in the pharma industry. An online jury, along with broader participation from the student community, who can publicly vote for their favourites, will award scores to participants. The final scores will have winners emerge with their winning ideas.

The Government's announcement of Ayushman Bharat has stirred a nation-wide interest in the subject of healthcare access and universal health coverage.

#HealthDialogue2019 provided a platform to discuss multifaceted approaches to developing an innovative and sustainable healthcare financing model.

Vaidheesh, President, OPPI and Managing Director - India & Vice President – South Asia, Glaxo SmithKline Pharmaceuticals Ltd. said, "India's public health system is taking steps in the right direction, with the introduction of Ayushman Bharat and most individual states having health coverage in place. With the end objective of providing solutions to healthcare coverage for all, the PwC-OPPI study titled 'Role of Healthcare Financing in improving access to state of the art treatments' illustrates the mechanism of market-based model for financing treatment of serious conditions like lung cancer, for example. This small step, we believe, will be the beginning of solutioning healthcare coverage for serious ailments in providing a multiple stakeholder innovative financing model."

On the role of technology in impacting health outcomes, he elaborated, "A technology enabled path to achieve better health outcomes could have significant economic benefit to the country. The BCG-OPPI report titled, 'Leapfrogging India's health outcomes' clearly outlines the need for Government and private sector to come together to create a new ecosystem that factors the convergence of healthcare and technology towards implementation of healthcare initiatives. With the Government's intent to increase healthcare spend to 5-6% of GDP, it calls for multi-stakeholder participation, in all areas of patient care. The time to unlock the healthcare potential for citizens in India has arrived and the next few years are critical as they will put India on the leapfrogging trajectory of enhanced health."

Mary Kom, celebrated Indian Olympic Boxer was also present at the Summit. Through her session she highlighted the fact that "Staying healthy and fit is critical not just for sports but for living itself. I am a living proof to Health Meets Hope, the mission for the OPPI Health Dialogue 2019. As a winner both inside and outside the boxing ring, I believe that good health makes life hopeful and fuller. I recognize and appreciate the years of research devoted by researchers in towards transforming human lives, as it is similar to the years of rigorous training a sportsperson undergoes. And success lies in reaching newer heights and setting benchmarks that push boundaries. So to all the researchers out there, keep refreshing your research and let's continue to punch above our weight."

The occasion also witnessed eminent personalities who have contributed in building a patient-focused healthcare ecosystem in the country recognised for their outstanding contributions.

Lifetime Achievement Award:

- Dr Sarada Menon, Founder & Advisor: Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF) for her tireless dedication towards improving mental health in India.
- Late Shri D G Shah, Founder of Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance for his long-standing contribution to the pharmaceutical industry in India.

Special Recognition:

- Dr Gagandeep Kang, Executive Director, Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI) for her unparalleled work in studying the transmission, development and prevention of enteric infections and their sequelae in children in India.
- Dr Y K Gupta, Principal Advisor (Projects), THSTI, for his tireless efforts in building an innovation-driven pharmaceutical ecosystem in India.

Access Champions 2019:

- Dr A Seema, Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET) was recognised for her contribution towards improving women's health.
- Geeta Verma, Shakardaha Health sub-center in Jhanjeli block of Mandi was recognised for her work in child health.
- Mritunjay Kumar Tiwary, Project Head & Trustee, Akhand Jyoti Eye Hospitals for his commitment towards improving healthcare access in India.

OPPI Scientist Awards 2019:

Dr Gajendra Pal Singh Raghava, Head Computational Biology, Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology won the Scientist of the year award.

Dr Nirmala Jagadish, Staff Scientist, Cancer Research Program (CRP), National Institute of Immunology bagged the Woman Scientist of the year award

Dr Sandip B Bharate, Principal Scientist, Medicinal Chemistry Division, CSIR - Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine was recognised as the Young Scientist of the year.

Some recommendations from the discussions of the Summit:

- A clear solution for health insurance coverage of critical illnesses at the state level through a multi-stakeholder engagement
- A tech enabled path to achieve better health outcomes could have significant economic benefit to the country
- As research-based pharma industry aims to bring the fruits of research to patients across the world, there is need for a robust policy framework governing healthcare regulations in the country