

## DELHI SOCIETY FOR PROMOTION OF RATIONAL USE OF DRUGS

### from the President's desk

It is customary to bring out the annual newsletter in March/April. For a variety of reasons, it had not been possible to bring out the newsletter in March/April this year. What follows is a brief resume of activities undertaken in the year ending March 2015 - the newsletter is being mailed to you in electronic format.

Although the year began with a flurry of activities, the tempo could not be sustained. The rest of the year was rather uneventful and it must be confessed, from the point of view of assignments, that the Society is passing through a lean period. We are, however, expecting some assignments.

The World Health Organization and the World Bank Group have brought out a report underlying that 400 million people do not have access to essential health services worldwide. The report also found, across 37 countries, 6% of the population was pushed further into extreme poverty (\$ 1.25/day) because they had to pay for health services out of their own pockets. When the study factored in a poverty measure of \$ 2/day, 17% of people in these countries were impoverished, or further impoverished, by health expenses.

The report, as per Dr. Ties Boerma, Director of the Department of Health Statistics and Information Systems at the World Health Organization, shows that it is possible to quantify universal health coverage and track progress towards its key goals, both in terms of health services and financial protection coverage.

– R. Parameswar

### A glance at some work done

#### National Training Course on “Promoting Rational Use of Medicines: Enhancing Access and Safe Use of Medicines”

A National Training course was conducted on “Promoting Rational Use of Medicines: Enhancing Access and Safe Use of Medicines” at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, from April 1 to 3, 2014. The course was intended for clinicians, clinical pharmacologists and other health officials. The programme was inaugurated by Professor Ranjit Roy Chaudhury, Patron of the Society, who also delivered the keynote address. Amongst others, Shri S.C.L. Das, Secretary Health, and Dr. N.V. Kamat, Director Health Services, Government of NCT of Delhi, were present at the inauguration.

The course focused on the well tested practical approaches in promoting more rational use of medicines in hospitals and improving access and safe use of essential medicines. The emphasis was on the practical aspects of medication safety so as to create a core of trained health professionals who would promote the rational use of medicines in their respective work places and also contribute to the proceedings of DTCs/PTCs in their respective hospitals. Health professionals (43 from the Delhi Government hospitals and 4 from corporate hospitals) participated in the course.



↑ Participants in a training session

#### The training course covered

- problem of Irrational Use of Medicines & Strategies to Improve Medication Use;
- development of Essential Medicines List/Formulary List –
  - Concept, Advantages and Management;
  - Assessing Evidence for Selection;
- using the Standard Treatment Guidelines for Improving Quality of Care;

- prescription writing and prescription audit;
- monitoring of Adverse Drug Reactions and Pharmacovigilance;
- medication errors: special focus on LASA, High Alert and Controlled Drugs;
- structure and function of DTCs/PTCs; and
- how to prevent emerging resistance to antimicrobials in hospital settings.

## National Training Programme for Nurses on “Medication Safety and Rational Use of Medicines”

A National Training programme was conducted on “Medication Safety and Rational Use of Medicines” at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, on June 27 & 28, 2014.



↑ Chief Guest and resource persons at the inauguration

The two days' programme was aimed at discussing all key components of rational use and administration of medicines. There were several presentations followed by discussions and group activities during the training. A manual for training of nurses on rational use of medicines, developed by the Delhi Society for Promotion of Rational Use of Drugs, was used in the training programme. 65 nurses (58 from the Delhi Government hospitals and 7 from corporate hospitals) participated in the programme.



↑ Participants from various hospitals

The topics included in the training sessions were:

- roles and responsibilities of nurses;
- medication errors and reporting;
- adverse drug reactions, monitoring and reporting;

- important drug-drug and drug-food interactions;
- rational use of antimicrobials with special focus on infection control and waste management;
- storage and handling of medicines with special focus on high alert, LASA and controlled drugs; and
- drug therapy/information to special populations – elderly, children, psychiatric patients, physically challenged.

## Workshop on Rational Use of Drugs and Essential Medicines at Erode

The Nandha College of Pharmacy, in association with the Delhi Society for Promotion of Rational Use of Drugs, organized a workshop on ‘Pharmacovigilance’ on December 5 and 6, 2014, at Erode, Tamil Nadu. More than 150 clinicians/pharmacists/health officials participated in the workshop.



↑ Resource persons and organizers at the inauguration

**Dr. Usha Gupta and Dr. Sangeeta Sharma were the principal resource persons from DSPRUD.**

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Delhi Society for Promotion of Rational Use of Drugs and the Nandha College of Pharmacy to conduct four training courses in 2015 was executed so as to keep continuity in capacity building in and around Erode. The first such workshop (for Nurses) was held in April 2015.

## Special Edition of Standard Treatment Guidelines for the Government of NCT of Delhi

A Special Edition of the Standard Treatment Guidelines incorporating the advances in clinical practices and to provide treatment regimens for diseases not included in the earlier edition, was brought out for the Directorate of Health Services, Government of NCT of Delhi. The updated special edition provides algorithmic approach to treatment in many chapters making the book more reader friendly, up-to-date and comprehensive.

The publication was officially released at a special function by the Chief Secretary – Government of NCT of Delhi, on May 27, 2014.

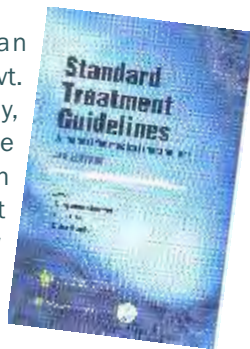


↑ Chief Secretary (GNCTD) releasing the STG

2500 copies of the publication were supplied to the Directorate of Health Services.

## Fourth Edition of Standard Treatment Guidelines

The Society had entered into an agreement with Wolters Kluwer India Pvt. Ltd., a name well known, internationally, as publishers of medical books. The Society has brought out its fourth edition of the Standard Treatment Guidelines in January 2015. The new edition takes cognizance of further advances in clinical practices and provides for treatment regimens for diseases not included in the earlier editions.



The response to the fourth edition of Standard Treatment Guidelines has been very encouraging.

## Consultancy Agreement with Empower School of Health, New Delhi

DSPRUD has entered into a Consulting Agreement with the Empower School of Health, New Delhi for providing consultancy in the area of procurement and supply chain in global health for two projects –

- (1) Consultancy Services for the Uttar Pradesh Health Systems Strengthening Project (UPHSSP), which includes preparation of following documents:
  - i) a procurement manual;
  - ii) bidding documents;
  - iii) a manual under Transparency Act; and
  - iv) gap analysis in the existing Procurement Policy of Uttar Pradesh and recommendations.
- (2) Consultancy Services for the United National Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Project, which includes
  - i) review of Essential Medicines List.

The Essential Medicines List for UNRWA has since been reviewed and submitted to the Empower School of Health (ESH).

## Increasing impoverishment due to rising health expenses

A World Health Organization (WHO) and World Bank Group report launched on June 12, 2015, shows that 400 million people do not have access to essential health services.

The report, 'Tracking Universal Health Coverage', is the first of its kind to measure health service coverage and financial protection to assess countries' progress towards universal health coverage.

The report also found, across 37 countries, 6% of the population was pushed further into extreme poverty (\$ 1.25/day) because they had to pay for health services out of their own pockets. When the study factored in a poverty measure of \$ 2/day, 17% of people in these countries were impoverished, or further impoverished, by health expenses.

“These high levels of impoverishment, which happen when poor people have to pay out of pocket for their own emergency health care, pose a major threat to the goal of eliminating extreme poverty”, says Dr. Kaushik Basu, Senior Vice President and Chief Economist at the World Bank Group.

WHO and the World Bank Group recommend that countries pursuing universal health coverage should aim to achieve a minimum of 80% population coverage of essential health services, and that everyone everywhere should be protected from catastrophic and impoverishing health payments.

## Jan Aushadhi Scheme (JAS) by the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India

DSPRUD was invited to participate in a brainstorming session organized by the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, to finalize the list of generic medicines for the Jan Aushadhi Scheme Basket. As a representative of DSPRUD, Dr. Uma Tekur attended the meeting on January 2, 2015. During the meeting 357 medicines were shortlisted. The said list was once again circulated to all the participants to provide their observations for finalization of the medicines basket.

DSPRUD has since sent its comments and recommendations.



- Secretary (H&FW), Government of NCT of Delhi, had constituted a Committee of Experts to review the extant Drug Policy (1994) and formulate a revised draft of Drug Policy for consideration of the Government of NCT of Delhi. DSPRUD was invited to be a member of this committee and was asked to contribute in the revision of the extant Drug Policy. Dr. Sangeeta Sharma and Mr. R. Parameswar had attended the first and the second meeting respectively.
- Dr. Sangeeta Sharma has been nominated as a member of the National Task Force on 'Standard Treatment Guidelines' by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

## Farewell to Dr. N.V. Kamat

In its meeting of the Executive Committee held on June 28, 2014, at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, DSPRUD bid farewell to Dr. N.V. Kamat on his retirement as Director Health Services – Government of Delhi. Secretary Health, Government of NCT of Delhi, Shri S.C.L. Das was also present at the dinner hosted after the Executive Committee meeting, in honour of Dr. N.V. Kamat. President thanked Dr. Kamat for the support given to DSPRUD during his tenure at the Directorate of Health Services. Dr. Kamat was presented with a bouquet and a gift.

## From the pages of CDDEP Weekly Digest ...

- **A new rule proposed by the FDA would require antibiotic manufacturers to report livestock antibiotic sales by type of animal**

Under current regulations, drug companies must report total antibiotic sales, but health advocates say that a more detailed picture of which animals are receiving antibiotics could help focus policy solutions aimed at reducing antibiotic resistance. [The New York Times]

- **Researchers have re-engineered an old antibiotic to create new and more potent versions-**

The versions that show early effectiveness in treating drug-resistant respiratory tract and sexually transmitted bacterial infections - their work published in the journal *Science Translational Medicine*, describes altering the chemical structure of spectinomycin, a safe but weak drug first introduced in the 1960s, to enable it to “enter a broad range of bacteria, bind to the ribosome and block protein synthesis. [Science Translational Medicine, Scicasts]

- **Antibiotics may be a viable alternative to surgery for treatment of appendicitis**

According to a paper that summarized five studies on antibiotic use for appendicitis published recently in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, antibiotics may be a viable alternative to surgery for treatment of appendicitis. The study found that 70% of patients receiving antibiotics for the infection did not ultimately require surgery, and that those that did were no more likely to have complications than those who had surgery immediately. [New England Journal of Medicine, The New York Times]

- **A new diagnostic test can reveal the entire history of a patient's viral infections with a single drop of blood**

The test described in *Science*, can detect over 1000 virus strains and could be used to track disease patterns across populations, uncover links between viruses and certain types of cancer and myriad other purposes, including applications in clinical medicine. According to the test's developers, it may eventually cost as little as \$ 25 to run. The patent application has only recently been submitted and the diagnostic is not yet available commercially. [The New York Times, Science]



## Delhi Society for Promotion of Rational Use of Drugs

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