

Proceedings of the Indian Association of Leprologists (IAL) Workshop cum CME on leprosy

Topic: "Update and activities to be sustained for elimination of leprosy and a world without leprosy deformities"

held on 28th December
at Dr RPG Medical College, Tanda, Dist Kangra, Himachal Pradesh.



DGHS, Dr Jagdish Prasad inaugurating the IAL workshop cum CME at DR RPG Medical College, Tanda

Eminent scientists, Professors, Teachers from Medical Colleges, students (both undergraduates and PG's) from RPG Medical College, Tanda, as well as Programme Managers from Central Leprosy Division, Government of India, State representatives and programme managers from Himachal Pradesh and Haryana participated in the Workshop.

Dr Jagdish Prasad, Director General Health Services, Government of India, inaugurated the

meet and Dr VM Katoch, Secretary Department of Health Research and Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research was the Chief Patron of the Workshop.

Dr Anil Chauhan, Principal, Dr Rajendra Prasad Medical College, Tanda and Dr Kiran Katoch, President, Indian Association of Leprologists, welcomed the Chief guest, Dr Jagdish Prasad; Chief Patron Dr VM Katoch; Experts; Professionals; Programme Managers from Central

Leprosy Division, Government of India; Programme managers and participants from States of Himachal Pradesh and Haryana; Members of the IAL Association; Director and staff from National JALMA Institute for Leprosy; faculty from PGIMER, Chandigarh, IGMC, Shimla and Dr RPG Medical College and undergraduate and post graduate students from Tanda Medical College.

Dr Jagdish Prasad, DGHS, in the opening address expressed his happiness on seeing the audience and desired that such Workshops/CME's should be organized in Medical Colleges and lauded the efforts of Dr RPG Medical College as well as the office bearers of the IAL Association for their efforts. He opined that with the active participation of students, teachers, programme managers and experts on selected subjects, the students (future health professionals) can be actively engaged and appraised in the shortcomings, difficulties as well as the success of the programmes at National level and in the various States. He appreciated the posters put up for the Workshop by the students, and urged them to interact with the experts and understand more about the disease. He announced that he shall also hold such interactive meetings in other Medical Colleges and also recommended that such meetings should be held more often and at regular intervals.

Dr VM katoch also appreciated that the Workshop was being organized in a Medical College with active participation of the staff and students of the College. He congratulated the Principal, staff, faculty and the students for their sincere efforts as well as their role in rapidly improving the ranking of their Medical College during the period. He informed the audience that this Tanda Medical College, is now ranked 18th among all the Government Medical Colleges in the country. He expressed his happiness in the efforts made by

the College in patient care, health service delivery, teaching and research activities. He urged the student community to work hard to bring more laurels to their College, State and Community at large. He emphasized that although the state had achieved elimination goal for leprosy, work needed to be intensified in decreasing the deformity rates among patients, as well as sustaining the programme gains and further improving them.

Dr Anoop Puri, Assistant Director General, Central leprosy Division briefed the audience on the elimination strategies being adopted and emphasized early detection and treatment of cases. He explained the early signs and symptoms of the disease and the methods of their reporting in the programme. He was delighted to see the participation of the students in the Workshop and emphasized the need to have such regular workshops in more endemic states in the country. He summarized the progress of the programme at the national level and methods being adopted as well as those that may be required in sustaining the gains.

Dr Kiran Katoch, former Director, NJIL & OMD and present President IAL, presented the findings of the National Sample Survey to assess the disease burden of leprosy including the stigma prevailing in the community. This project was undertaken at the national level by the two Institutes of ICMR, namely NJIL & OMD and NIMS with full participation and partnership with all the states and Union territories (UT's). Employing the inverse sampling methodology the estimated cases in the country by active case detection have calculated to be between 2 to 3 lakhs annually. This was as expected as the estimated cases were based on active case detection. NLEP had reported 1.35 lakh new cases during the same year, on basis of self reporting to the health facilities. The small differences in the estimated

cases by active case findings is as expected. As in a subtle disease like leprosy with no fatality and subtle signs and symptoms in the early stages, the self reporting cases often overlook and neglect the difficulties caused by the symptoms in early disease. In about 11 states and 2 UT's the estimates were above those of the elimination level, and in another 2 states the higher limit of the estimated cases fell above the elimination level. This was also as expected as these states were also reporting more cases in the programme. However, concerning deformities caused by leprosy disease, the findings were different. It was observed that the deformity rates in the states and UT's varied. On the whole this was negligible in the UT's as compared to the states, except in Daman and Diu, wherein all the cases detected in the survey (the NCDR was less than the national average in the country) had deformities. Furthermore, in some states there were more Grade 1 deformities whereas in others there were more of Grade 2 deformities. More efforts were needed to prevent the Grade 2 deformities, by adequate and timely treatment of Grade 1 deformities and enablement of patients with disabilities. During the survey it was observed that the level of self stigma in patients as well as workplaces and schools had diminished tremendously and leprosy affected individuals (LAP's) were well accepted in social gatherings. However, on direct questioning of the society at large the responses of the community were variable. Although a large majority of the community believed that leprosy was curable and could be treated they were confused and sometimes hesitant regarding close direct interaction/relationship with them and more IEC activities were required for removing them. The findings of individual states of Dehli, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh were discussed with the respective experts and programme managers present in the Workshop. Strategies and em-

phasis required to further strengthen the programme, decrease the occurrence of deformities and methods required in sustaining the programme were detailed, discussed and emphasized.

Dr Bhushan Kumar, former HOD, Department of Skin and VD, PGIMER, Chandigarh appraised the audience on "Research priorities and recent developments in leprosy". He stressed the need of re-introducing slit skin smear testing (SSS) in the programme, and assessing newer tools available for early diagnosis. He emphasized the need of developing bio-markers for diagnosis and monitoring treatment of reactions and assessing nerve damage. Other modalities, drugs (Clofazimine, Thalidomide etc), immunomodulators (*Mycobacterium indicus pranii* also known as MIP and BCG) were available and should be used for better management of reactions and nerve damage. He stressed on the need of having a surveillance mechanism for monitoring drug resistance and urged the programme to take it up urgently. He opined that in some settings of high endemic pockets and close contacts chemoprophylaxis was being contemplated. In India both tuberculosis and leprosy were a public health concern and therefore single dose of Rifampicin, a highly bactericidal ant-tuberculosis agent, should not be used. Immune-prophylaxis with *Mycobacterium indicus pranii* (MIP) should be considered and was better than chemoprophylaxis with single dose of Rifampicin which was being pursued internationally.

A panel discussion was held on the methods to be adopted for early diagnosis including undertaking of slit skin smear examination, RLEP PCR detection from skin scrapings, ultra sound sonography for detecting nerve involvement and nerve impairment. Emphasis was made on diagnosis of reactions (both type 1 and type 2), and especially when they presented as a first symptom in leprosy



Posters made by students of Dr RPG Medical College at the Workshop/CME



The panelist for the discussion were Prof Bhushan Kumar, Former Head of the Dept. of Skin and VD, PGIMER; Prof NL Sharma, former Head of Dept Skin and VD, IGMC, Shimla; Prof HK Kar, HOD and Dean, RML Medical College, New Dehli; Dr Anoop Puri, Asst. Director General, CLD, MoHFW, GOI, New Dehli; Dr Srikanth Tripathy, Director NJIL & OMD [ICMR], Agra; Prof Vikram Mahajan HOD,

Dept of Skin and VD, Dr RPG Medical College, Tanda and Dr Kiran Katoch former Director NJIL & OMD, Agra was the Moderator. Emphasis was made on detecting reactions and instituting early and effective treatment with close monitoring. Improving therapy by the addition of Clofazimine to PB patients, and preventing reactions and relapses by its use was discussed and the

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Poster Presentation
28.12.2013

S No	Name	Position
1.	Joban Preet Singh, Abhinay Chauhan	1st
2.	Ajay, Akansha, Anuj, Archita, Arvind	2nd
3.	Pallavi, Neha	3rd
4.	Samrat Chatterjee	Participant
5.	Savvy Dhorta, Shaweta Sharma, Ankita Dadhwal, Neha Sharma, Pallavi Bhardwaj	Participant
6.	Aakriti Dhiman, Aanchal Rana	Participant
7.	Shailendra Gautam, Rajat Gupta, Roop, Neeti	Participant
8.	Roohani, Anshul	Participant
9.	Sokesh, Yogesh, Munish	Participant
10.	Ankita Dadhwal, Shaweta Sharma, Savvy Dhorta, Neha Sharma, Pallvi Bhardwaj	Participant

PRIZES

First Prize : ₹ 5000

Second Prize : ₹ 3000

Third Prize : ₹ 2000

programme was urged to undertake the same at National level. There was adequate and sufficient large scale evidence in different institutions and field settings with adequate follow up of long duration, that the addition of *Mycobacterium indicus pranii* (MIP, commercially available as Immunovac) with MDT resulted in more rapid and faster, bacterial clearance and it helped in reducing the severity and incidences of reactions in both PB and MB cases. It was observed that, with its use there was greater patient satisfaction as the lesions cleared clinically also. Use of MIP as immunoprophylactic agent for immunoprophylaxis in select groups, to prevent the disease and intercept the transmission of the disease was also discussed and considered. Panelists opined that use of MIP as immunoprophylactic agent would be better than the use of single dose Rifampicin for chemoprophylaxis in select population as was being contemplated.

Dr Swapan Samanta, Vice president of the

association and Community Ophthalmologist at Gouripore State Leprosy Hospital, Bankura, West Bengal, India presented his experiences of working in Community ophthalmology at Chattisgarh. He focused on the benefits if had to the society and methods of preventable blindness in the region. He emphasized that no longer was leprosy considered a cause of blindness and proper treatment, surgical removal and intraocular lens implant in the eye had ensured fruitful and beneficial results in the recipients.

The message and catchy slogans for educating the common man, removing wrong and age old socio-cultural beliefs from the community were very nicely displayed in the poster presentations by medical students and is being reproduced below. This was appreciated by all.

Dr Ashok Bharadwaj, Prof and Head Ccommunity Medicine, Dr RPG medical college, Tanda as well as the Organizing Secretary of the Conference

thanked all the guests experts, members of IAL, teachers and faculty of the Medical Colleges, Programme managers of the states and Central Leprosy Division as well as the students for their active participation.

Dr DS Chauhan Scientist D at NJIL & OMD, Agra and Honorary Secretary IAL as well as Dr Kiran Katoch, President IAL thanked Dr Anil Chauhan, Principal and Dr Ashok Bharadwaj Organizing Sec and Prof and HOD, Community Medicine, Dr RPG Medical College for their whole hearted and tireless endeavours in organizing the work-

shop/CME and providing all type of support to the noble cause. They expressed their gratitude to the Principal, faculty and students of the Tanda Medical College for making the Workshop a success. They also thanked the experts, faculty of IGMC, Shimla, Dr RPG Medical College, Tanda, Experts, programme managers of CLD, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, members of the IAL for their participation and support to the Workshop. They also thanked the supportive staff of the Medical College who worked hard to make this Workshop/CME a success.