

## India can still achieve TB elimination target by 2025

**New Delhi, Dec 6, 2020 ([IssueWire.com](http://IssueWire.com))** - The International Institute for Human Development, India (IIHD India) and Indian Association of Respiratory Care (IARC) organized a live seminar to deliberate on how to ensure continuity of TB Care in COVID19 crises.

Dr. Ruchi Sogarwal, Chief Executive Officer, IIHD India said, *“COVID19 has placed unprecedented demands and pressure on the health-system nationally and globally. Finding and treating patients with TB remain the fundamental pillars of TB prevention and care. Remote teleconsultation of the TB patients and the use of various health solutions self empower patients to access care and improve adherence. Today’s deliberations suggest that an effective and rapid response to both COVID-19 and TB treatment and management services should run simultaneously”*.

Dr. Jerry Paul, President, Indian Association of Respiratory Care said, *“Tuberculosis is one such chronic respiratory disease affecting millions of patients in India. It was once considered an incurable disease, which became a potentially curable disease with new drugs during the latter part of the last century. Unfortunately, it is becoming incurable again. Keeping this in mind the Government of India has announced its plan to eliminate TB by 2025 during the Union Budget 2017–2018. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has added on to this threat and limited the resources to tackle TB. A joint effort by the government, medical practitioners, respiratory therapists, society, and researchers at large is essential to take control of this disease.”*

Dr. Sunil Mehra, Executive Director at MAMTA Health Institute for Mother and Child, Delhi highlighted, *“India can still achieve TB elimination target by 2025 if we continue our efforts in strengthening the last mile while focusing on the real-time data for effective implementation of the planned strategies”*.

Dr. Asha Frederick, Joint Director of Medical & Rural Health Services, National TB Elimination Programme, Tamil Nadu highlighted the ‘door-step delivery’ approach in ensuring treatment management of TB patients during the pandemic. Likewise, the best practices and learning were presented by Dr. Sunil Kumar M, State TB Officer, National TB Elimination Programme, Kerala.

*“Through meticulous planning including causal analysis and establishment of systems, highest political and administrative commitment, integration with other programs, committed staff at field, robust engagement of private sector, supportive supervision and motivation is helping us to detect cases while ensuring continuity of TB care in COVID19 times”*, mentioned by Dr. Kamlesh Kumar Pandey, Consultant Pulmonologist at Wockhardt Hospital, Mumbai.

*“Globally, we have seen the loss of life, witnessed how the poor are rendered jobless and homeless, their plight on way back to their villages as on foot returning migrants and loss in the global economy and health indicators. But COVID19 has taught us two big lessons – firstly, it is time to design people-centric solutions and secondly, use technology connect and mainstream the disconnected and unreached”*, mentioned by Subhi Quraishi, Director, ZMQ Development, Delhi.

While talking about the future technology solutions for TB management, Richard Featherstone, Director, Aerogen Asia Pacific, Ireland mentioned, *“Aerogen is the only closed-circuit aerosol drug delivery system that mitigates the transmission of patient-generated infectious aerosol and delivers effective aerosol treatment for COVID-19 patients. It is designed for the safety of both the patient and the caregiver. Multiple international guidance has been published outlining the use of this mesh technology in the treatment of COVID-19 patients”*.

Dr. Narayana Prasad, Co-Founder & Director, Public Health Literacy, Boston highlighted the significance of public health literacy in stigma reduction, which is different in TB patients than COVID19 patients.

*“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 by Ms Madhuragauri Shevade, Associate Vice President, Indian Association of Respiratory Care.

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