

## Safe Point applauds Govt. to launch Viral Hepatitis Control Program

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Mr. Pradeep Sarin, the trustee of Safe Point, applauded the great initiative “National Viral Hepatitis Control Program” launched by Shri J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare on 28th July, 2018 to mark the World Hepatitis Day 2018 to work towards elimination of viral hepatitis by 2030 in India.

At the function, Shri J P Nadda also released the Operational Guidelines for National Viral Hepatitis Control Program, National Laboratory Guidelines for Viral Hepatitis Testing and National Guidelines for Diagnosis and Management of Viral Hepatitis. Shri Manoj Sinha, MoS (Independent Charge), Ministry of Communication also released the Commemorative Stamp at the occasion.

Dr. (Col) HS Ratti, an epidemiologist and Project Advisor to Safe Point which is working to create awareness about safe injections is hopeful that the ‘National Plan on Safe Injections’ initiative launched is India’s commitment towards elimination of viral hepatitis by well laid out strategy which hopefully will now be covering Prevention from Unsafe Injections, Testing patients with safe equipment that prevents Needle Stick injury to the lab technician and free Treatment to the patient.

Dr. Ratti urged the Govt. to accelerate a switch to “Auto Disable Syringes” to limit HIV and Hepatitis Epidemic. There are villages with over half the population infected with Hepatitis or HIV due to reuse of Syringes by quacks.

In order to prevent reuse of syringes and contain spread of infection, it is advisable and recommended to use AD syringes specifically designed to prevent reuse. This reuse prevention has been strongly advocated by WHO.

Andhra Pradesh government has already taken a lead in this regard and had issued instructions in May for 100% use of AD syringes in its public health facilities from 28th Jul 2018 which is observed as World Hepatitis Day.

MoHFW has launched the ‘National Viral Hepatitis Control Program’, with the goal of ending viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030 in the country. The aim of the initiative is to reduce morbidity and mortality due to viral hepatitis.

The National Viral Hepatitis Control Program marks the beginning of the nation's journey to control viral hepatitis thereby reducing mortality and morbidity attributed to it. The programme will prevent, find, test and treat viral hepatitis.