

## PANFORAnIC focuses on preventing hospital-acquired infections and AMR

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**Two-day conclave calls upon behavioural change and effective clinical practices to strengthen infection prevention & control for better patient care**



Fortis Escorts Heart Institute, New Delhi, organized PANFORAnIC, the first combined meeting of Anaesthesiologists (PANFORA) and Infection Control (PANFORIC) teams from Fortis hospitals across India on 9-10 March 2019. The primary objective was to discuss infection prevention and control, share knowledge on best practices and recent advances among specialties, taking priority measures and planning exchange training programmes. The event saw participation from delegates from hospitals from across the Fortis network in India.

The PANFORAnIC conclave witnessed paper presentations, interactive sessions, posters and other collaterals with key messages, quiz and workshops. It brought together specialists, clinicians, microbiologists, anaesthetists, nurses and other support groups to deliberate upon the challenges to successful outcomes around healthcare associated infections, effective strategies for their prevention and control, and some of the complex emerging problems like antibiotic resistance.

Identifying “Antibiotic Stewardship” as a major initiative being undertaken by Fortis control to spread awareness about appropriate use of antibiotics, participants called the advent of ‘super bugs’, or ‘antimicrobial resistance’, a critical public health issue requiring commitment and action from all stakeholders offering healthcare service delivery. Participants spoke about how they are not only working towards safer outcomes, but also behavioral change on using and preserving antibiotics. This conclave held periodically over the last few years is a necessary exercise for clinicians and key stakeholders to discuss and arrive at most effective measures of infection control.

Without effective antimicrobials for treatment of infections, risks during critical medical procedures such as cardiac implants, organ transplants, chemotherapy, diabetes management, caesarean birth deliveries and hip/knee replacements become very high. Coupled with the fact that the microorganisms causing such infections have also developed survival mechanisms, antibiotic resistance is likely to cause or directly contribute to around 20 lakh Indian patients dying of healthcare associated infections by 2050. A report by the Centre for Disease Dynamics, Economics and Policy (CDDEP) 2015 on the State of the World's Antibiotics has noted that 58, 000 new-born babies died in the year 2013 in India due to drug-resistant infections.

Dr Murali Chakravarthy, Chairman, Central Infection Prevention and Control Committee, Fortis Healthcare said, "The Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) programme at Fortis Healthcare calls for rational and judicious use of life-saving antibiotics with the unconditional support of Fortis clinicians. The ultimate goal is to address the rising issue of anti-microbial resistance and overall purpose is to bring about a change in the antibiotic prescription patterns with focus on the safety of patients and the larger community."

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), Antimicrobial resistance happens when microorganisms (such as bacteria, fungi, viruses, and parasites) change when they are exposed to antimicrobial drugs (such as antibiotics, antifungals, antivirals and antimalarials). Microorganisms that develop antimicrobial resistance are sometimes referred to as "superbugs"

As a result, the medicines become ineffective and infections persist in the body, increasing the risk of spread to others. In addition, Healthcare associated infections or Hospital acquired Infections (HAIs) are the major challenge today for the healthcare industry. As bugs increasingly grow resistant, treating options are also becoming limited. The cost of healthcare for patients with resistant infections is higher than care for patients with non-resistant infections due to longer duration of illness, additional tests and use of more expensive drugs. Globally, 480,000 people develop multi-drug resistant TB each year, and drug resistance is starting to complicate the fight against HIV and malaria, as well.