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MoH&FW's virtual workshop on cGMP for Indian pharma industry held

15 June 2021 | News

Health Ministry has collaborated with WHO, JSS AHER, Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance and partners to provide a unique learning platform



The third of a series of six virtual workshops on Current Good Manufacturing Practices to support the Indian pharmaceutical industry's vision of providing world-class quality medical products was inaugurated by Dr Mandeep Bhandari, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India. The third workshop has 125 participants from 40 pharma units.

Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoH&FW) collaborated with the World Health Organization (WHO), JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research at Mysuru (JSS AHER), and the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA).

In his inaugural address, Dr Bhandari, MoH&FW said, "This initiative of establishing robust learning and training platform meets the critical need of enabling further up-gradation of the pharmaceutical sector for global standards of quality. This will have a far-reaching positive impact."

Welcoming the capacity-strengthening workshops, Dr VG Somani, Drug Controller General of India, said, "We are committed to the highest regulatory standards to ensure quality, safety and efficacy of medical products. It is our constant endeavour that our standards are at par with the best in the world."

Speaking on the occasion, the WHO representatives from HQ, WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia, and WHO Country Office for India said, "It is for the first time anywhere in the world that we have attempted a programme like this. At the heart of these workshops is the underlying philosophy behind the current Good Manufacturing Practice (cGMP) - ensuring that products are consistently produced and controlled according to quality standards."

The genesis of these workshops is a survey of the pharma sector in India by WHO in 2014, which had recommended further strengthening of the cGMP with the support of WHO.

"The virtual workshops on cGMP is a key step in that direction, and we are delighted to partner in this path-breaking program," said Sudarshan Jain, Secretary-General, Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance.

Shirish Belapure, Senior Technical Advisor, Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance, said, "IPA Quality forum has one prime objective of upgrading the quality of Indian pharma and these workshops meet the need. IPA fully supports this initiative."

National and international experts, including from WHO (HQ, Regional Office for South-East Asia, Country Office for India) and leading industry voices came together to design a need-based workshop programme. This was followed by a successful pilot workshop on cGMP for pharmaceutical units in December 2020 on a unique and dedicated WHO-JSS AHER web portal.

"It is a privilege for us to have anchored this initiative. We are grateful to the health ministry, WHO and partners for the faith reposed in us," said Dr Surinder Singh, Vice-Chancellor, JSS AHER. To ensure long-term impact, a mentor will be guiding the participants for an informed understanding and implementation of WHO cGMP, prequalification guidelines and other world-class quality standards. Importantly, the workshops are also contributing to the larger developmental agenda of health for all.

Dr B Suresh, Pro-Chancellor, JSS AHER said, "The workshops are an important step for enabling the enhancement of pharma standards and contributing to global agendas, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We are delighted to be part of this process."

Under this initiative, a total of six workshops are being conducted - two for formulation manufacturing pharma units, three for active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) manufacturing units, and one for medical devices and IVD manufacturers. Cumulatively, over 650 plus participants from over 185 units will take part in this capacity-strengthening programme.