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Stakeholders convene to build roadmap for strengthening cervical cancer screening in Karnataka

06 October 2023 | News

A policy consultation was organised by the Government of Karnataka



The Government of Karnataka, Directorate of Health and Family Welfare Services and FIND recently organised a policy consultation in Bengaluru to engage with key stakeholders on identifying strategies to strengthen screening for cervical cancer in Karnataka.

The consultation was inaugurated by Dinesh Gundu Rao, the Minister for Health and Family Welfare, who highlighted Karnataka's commitment to prioritising cervical cancer elimination as a model for the country.

During the discussions, the introduction of World Health Organization (WHO)-recommended high-performance HPV DNA tests, complemented by self-collection of samples to ensure effective screening, were emphasised as critical components of a robust cervical cancer elimination strategy.

Dr Sanjay Sarin, Vice President Access at FIND, said: "One woman dies every 2 minutes from cervical cancer, yet it is a preventable and curable disease. The WHO strategy for cervical cancer elimination calls for at least 70% of women to be screened for cervical cancer using a high-performance HPV test by the time they are 35 years old, and again by age 45. We welcome the Government's commitment to accelerate progress towards these targets, and the roadmap developed in Karnataka is a critical step towards that goal that will provide a model for the country. We continue to pledge our support and diagnostic expertise to protect women and girls by beating this deadly disease."

The meeting was made possible with the support of Roche Diagnostics. Dr Thilo Brenner, APAC Sub-Region Head (India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, and the Philippines), Roche Diagnostics, said, "By educating women and expanding access to HPV screening, we aim to drive systemic and behavioural change in the management of cervical cancer."