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Policy consultation to discuss opportunities to strengthen cervical cancer screening in India

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Stakeholders convene in New Delhi to commit to accelerating cervical cancer elimination in India



A policy consultation on cervical cancer screening and treatment was recently held in New Delhi that demonstrated the collective resolve amongst key stakeholders to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer in India.

The consultation was organised by FIND, a non-profit organization focused on improving equitable access to diagnosis. It was attended by Members of Parliament Dr Fauzia Khan and Vandana Chavan, who highlighted the importance of prioritising women's health and suggested a roundtable with Parliamentarians to discuss strategies to eliminate cervical cancer.

During the consultation, the Government of India's commitment to eliminate cervical cancer was underscored by Professor S.P. Singh Baghel, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, who delivered a video message calling upon stakeholders to adopt a multi-sectoral approach to bring cervical cancer diagnosis to the doorstep of the community.

During the discussions, the introduction of high-performance human papillomavirus (HPV) DNA tests recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), complemented by approaches such as self-sample collection to ensure effective screening, and strengthening inter-ministerial collaboration, were emphasised as critical components of a robust cervical cancer elimination strategy.

Dr Sanjay Sarin, Vice President Access, FIND, said, "FIND aims to increase access to HPV screening and supporting countries with meeting the WHO cervical cancer elimination goals."

The consultation was supported by Roche Diagnostics. Michelle Medeiros, Head of Access and Policy, Roche Diagnostics Asia Pacific, said, "Collaborative multi-stakeholder partnerships and system-wide approaches can tackle some of the biggest obstacles faced in improving inequities in cervical cancer care. This includes establishing a nationwide momentum towards programmes, funding and infrastructure for immunisation, early screening, diagnosis, and treatment in cervical cancer."