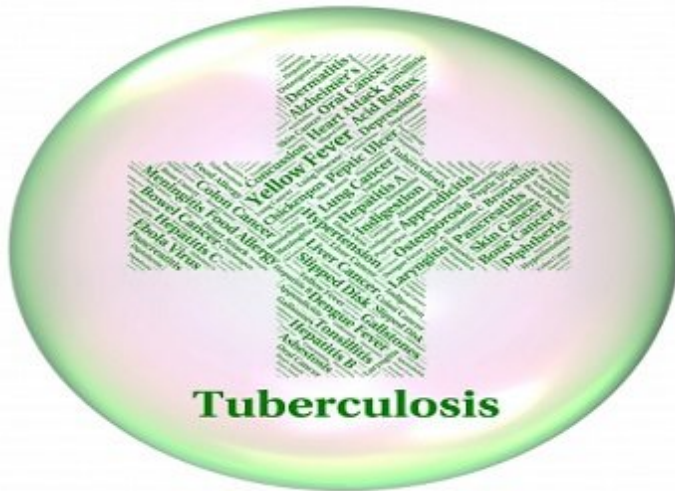


Haryana joins the Call to action for a TB-Free India

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Medanta - The Medicity hospital organized a conference on Lung Health and Tuberculosis (TB) to discuss the need for improved TB diagnosis to make Haryana TB-Free.

Dr Sunil Khaparde, DDG, Central TB Division; Dr A Jaiswal, National Institute of TB and Respiratory Diseases, Dr Bornali Dutta, Senior Consultant, Respiratory Medicine, Dr Reuben Swamicken, US Agency for International Development (USAID), Ms Kavita Ayyagari, Project Director - Challenge TB, The Union and Dr Jamhoih Tonsing, Director, The Union South-East Asia Office were present at the event. The results from the phase I of Mission TB-Free Haryana and the plan for phase II were discussed.

Mission TB-Free Haryana aims to identify patients that suffer from TB, but are sputum negative and therefore not detected early or start treatment. The digital X-Ray helps identify symptomatic pulmonary TB in patients who are sputum negative and refers them to Government TB centers for treatment.

The Mobile Van is present at the primary and community health centres (PHCs and CHCs) at the village and block level, where X-Ray facilities are not available. ASHA workers refer the symptomatic patients for testing and the District TB officers have been supporting this initiative by taking active interest in case detection and referrals.

Dr Sunil Kaparde, deputy director general, Central TB Division, said, "Dr Trehan has a vision for TB-Free Haryana and this initiative of the Medanta Mobile Vans will definitely contribute to the cause of TB-Free India as this will help reach those TB patients not reached through the program and start them on treatment earlier. If Medanta can add linkages with the CBNAAT testing facilities now being introduced through the Government, and offer this facility itself, this will help further identify drug resistant TB patients."

Mission TB-Free Haryana

• The pilot of this project was conducted in Rewari where of 354 patients, 122 tested positive on X-Ray for pulmonary TB, accounting a 35 per cent positive rate for X-Ray screening.

• Based on the success in one district, and responding to the Call to Action for a TB-Free India, Medanta committed to extend diagnostic support to the RNTCP in all districts of Haryana, in a phased manner over the next 5 years.

• The phase I of Mission TB-Free Haryana started on December 1, 2015, spanning 5 districts of the state which included Gurgaon, Mewat, Jhajjar, Palwal and Rewari. 698 suspected TB patients were screened during this period, of which 265 were diagnosed positive on digital chest X-Ray through the Medanta Mobile Van and started on DOTS.

• An intensive drive for three weeks in Mewat helped in diagnosing 215 positive TB cases of the suspected 625.

• The programme is continuing in these districts and will be expanded to Sonapat, Rohtak, Bhiwani, Faridabad and Mahendergarh in phase II.

Ms Kavita Ayyagiri, project director - Challenge TB, The Union said, "With the current decline rate of 2 percent in TB cases annually, much more needs to be done to reach the zero TB goal. We are happy that a leading hospital like Medanta has taken forward this initiative to diagnose TB patients in remote and rural areas of the state of Haryana. This initiative has the support of the Central TB division and the State and District TB Officers. It is an example of how public private partnerships that are collaborative and complementary can help reach patients."

Dr Naresh Trehan, chairman and managing director, Medanta - The Medicity was part of the Mumbai Dialogue: Towards a TB-free India and announced the expansion of this initiative to all districts of Haryana. The 'TB-free India' Campaign is a part of the Global Challenge TB Project funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases (The Union) is providing technical assistance for this initiative.

Expansion of services to entire state requires at-least five mobile vans and moving in a hub and spoke manner across districts. There is a need for resources to come together through multi-lateral partnerships.