

National NCD Summit: Experts ask for synergizing efforts to control diabetes

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In light of the growing incidence of diabetes, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), in collaboration with Eli Lilly and Company (Lilly) released a National White Paper on "Synergizing Efforts in Diabetes Care at the Tertiary Level" at the 3rd edition of the National NCD Summit on August 12, 2015. Dr Jagdish Prasad, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India was present to release the white paper. NCD Summit 2015, aimed at creating a national level platform to strengthen public health strategies for comprehensive diabetes management specifically at Tertiary level.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Jagdish Prasad, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, highlighted the fact that India is at risk of becoming the diabetes capital of the world by 2025. "Rapid globalization and lack of precautionary measures is the leading cause of diabetes in the country. Education and preventive screening would be key to avoid the burden of diabetes", said Dr Prasad. He stressed on the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and its impact on diabetes. Our focus should be to avoid becoming the diabetes capital of the world".

This year's white paper drafted with support from Population Services International (PSI) is based on the recommendations that emerged from thematic roundtable discussions held in Hyderabad, Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai and Guwahati, around diabetic complications such as Retinopathy, Neuropathy, Gestational Diabetes Mellitus, Cardio Vascular Disease, Nephropathy and Infections including tuberculosis. These regional roundtables witnessed participation from leading endocrinologists, specialists, and policy makers from key government institutes and organizations. These discussions were actively supported by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Mr Edgard Olaizola Story, Managing Director of Lilly India said, "Lilly is committed to making life better for people living diabetes and we have been working to meet the needs of people with diabetes beyond medicines. We realized that increase in the cases of diabetes in the country has led to a growing burden on tertiary-level care hospitals, hence there was an urgent need for initiating a dialogue with stakeholders to strengthen the policies and practices around diabetes management in these facilities. We hope this initiative will help reduces complications related to diabetes.

Dr Anupam Sibal, Member, CII National Healthcare Council and Group Medical Director, Apollo Hospitals Group, welcomed the guests at the 3rd edition of the National NCD Summit and the release of the whitepaper. He said, "Non-communicable diseases in general and diabetes in particular would take the center stage for discussion at the summit. The aim of the summit is to strengthen and synergize the efforts of diabetes care at the tertiary level. Technology plays an important role in dealing with the burden of diabetes. Along with that, partnerships with different countries like Europe and United States would contribute to prevent diabetes. Innovation and thinking out of the box would also be pivotal in meeting the challenge of diabetes."

Below are some of the highlights from the recommendations that were drawn from the Regional Roundtables which have been published in the National White Paper 2015:

- Mandatory screening of complications a must at the time of diabetes diagnosis
- Integration of National Programme For Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke(NPCDCS) and various Government schemes such as Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP) should be done as this will ensure bilateral screening for diabetes and Tuberculosis
- All pregnant women in India should be screened for Gestational Diabetes in early pregnancy
- For effective diabetes management, blood glucose, blood pressure and lipid profile must be monitored regularly
- Every diabetic patient must get an eye checkup annually
- Life style management should be made part of the curriculum of schools
- Paramedics should be trained for screening diabetes and its complications and should also be trained on Basic Life Support and Advanced Cardiac Life Support
- Employing technology driven tools such as tele-medicine and mhealth for screening and management of diabetes, especially to cater rural population
- Primary healthcare centres should be equipped with glucometers, glucose strips, Trop-T, and ECG machines
- Need to create awareness amongst general public to remove fear of insulin and ensure therapy compliance
- Enhance the health care facilities by means of insurance policies, free medicines and insulin which can be implemented through collaboration of government, public and private partnerships (PPPs)

CII and Lilly had convened the 1st National NCD Summit in 2013 and published a National White Paper to suggest mechanisms for strengthening the NPCDCS program. In 2014, the 2nd National NCD Summit was organized with the objective to shape Diabetes Policies in Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs). These two national white papers received significant appreciation from policy makers and practitioners.