

CAMTech introduces breakthrough solutions for diabetes epidemic in India

13 October 2015 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

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Committed to the concept of 'Make in India' and sourcing local health innovation, the Consortium for Affordable Medical Technologies (CAMTech) at Massachusetts General Hospital Global Health, introduced path-breaking solutions at the CAMTech Diabetes Innovation Hack-a-thon on October 10-11, 2015, at the Indian School of Business (ISB) in Hyderabad.

The event brought together over 200 participants, industry mentors and organizers to develop innovative and affordable health technologies that can improve the prevention, diagnosis and management of diabetes in India.

The event included keynote speeches from distinguished leaders from the Indian healthcare industry, who challenged participants to focus on specific, diabetes-related problems, such as access to care, affordable treatment and a lack of awareness and education about diabetes.

"Lifestyle modification works, but how do we translate this into a community activity, where 72% of India's population lives in rural areas but [most] qualified consultants practice in urban areas?" asked Dr Nadimity Ganapathi Sastry, director, Dr Mohan's Diabetes Specialty Centre. "There is a lack of awareness and there are problems with access to specialized diabetes care facilities. There is an urgent need to implement the '5 A Test' that will make diabetes care in rural India Available, Accessible, Affordable, Appropriate and Acceptable."

From early screening and detection tools to gamification aimed at compliance to novel insulin delivery mechanisms, this year's event saw a total of 40 innovations developed over the weekend.

Participants worked around the clock for 48 hours, pitching over 60 diabetes-related healthcare challenges, forming teams, prototyping solutions, and developing business models before presenting their ideas to a panel of judges.

The judging panel included the following experts from public health, engineering and business, reflecting CAMTech's cross-sector approach to innovation:

â€¢ Mr Ganapathy Venugopal, CEO, Axilor
â€¢ Dr Vijay Panikar, Arogya World
â€¢ Ms Elizabeth Bailey, Director, CAMTech
â€¢ Dr Shylaja Srinivasan, Pediatric Endocrine Fellow, Massachusetts General Hospital
â€¢ Dr Anthony Vipin Das, Ophthalmologist, L V Prasad Eye Institute

"It has been so inspiring to see this diabetes initiative unfold into something that can truly change lives in India," said Ms Elizabeth Bailey, director at CAMTech. "The hack-a-thon transformed ideas into winning solutions, and now we want to make sure those innovations are brought to scale in India."

This year's event awarded monetary prizes to winning teams in several categories, including:

â€¢ **\$1,000 CAMTech Grand Prize:** Team Cheeni Kum - a multi-parameter early screening and detection tool to help diagnose diabetic peripheral neuropathy.
â€¢ **\$1,000 Marico Innovation Foundation First Place Prize:** Team E Stick - a non-invasive device that uses infrared light to measure blood glucose through the earlobe.
â€¢ **\$500 CAMTech First Runner-Up:** Team Cool Guys - a reliable, reusable, affordable and user-friendly storage case that keeps insulin pens refrigerated through the use of an organic gel.
â€¢ **\$250 CAMTech Second Runner-Up:** Team Aankhey - a mobile application that helps doctors and paramedics diagnose and raise awareness about diabetic retinopathy.

In addition to monetary prizes, both the winners and participants will receive several post-hack-a-thon opportunities to continue working on their innovations:

â€¢ Marico Innovation Foundation (MIF), the CSR arm of Marico Limited and Villgro, India's oldest and foremost social enterprise incubator, will provide funding and hands-on mentorship to help teams convert their prototypes into viable, low-cost innovative solutions.
â€¢ Through sponsorship from Terumo, CAMTech will offer \$1,000 to the team that makes the most progress on their innovation 45 days after the hack-a-thon.
â€¢ Engagement, mentorship and collaboration with local and global experts from health, business and engineering/technology through the CAMTech Online Innovation Platform.

"It's been extremely motivating to see the outcomes out of the MIF- CAMTech Hackathon. We are looking forward to identify and support innovative solutions that will positively impact prevention, detection and management of diabetes that will eventually help the underserved population in India," says Mr Harsh Mariwala, founder, Marico Innovation Foundation.