BioSpectrum
the business of Bi
24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

MoH&FW organises capacity building workshop for health correspondents on COVID-19

24 June 2021 | News

According to the health secretary, the five-pronged strategy of covid appropriate behaviour, testing, tracing, treatment and vaccination are potent weapons against COVID-19



Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in partnership with UNICEF, held a capacity building workshop for media professionals and health correspondents across the county on the current COVID situation in India, the need to bust myths about COVID vaccines and vaccination, and reinforce the importance of COVID Appropriate Behaviour (CAB).

Rajesh Bhushan, Union Health Secretary addressed the national workshop which was attended by more than 300 health journalists and senior officials of DD News, All India Radio, Press Information Bureau of various States/UTs. At the outset, the health secretary thanked all the media professionals for their sustained efforts in the fight against COVID-19. He remarked that the media is the most important pillar with a social responsibility to inform and educate the masses in our collective fight against COVID-19.
"As the second wave stabilises and the daily cases are seen to be declining across the country, the focus should be on vaccination and overcoming vaccine hesitancy," he stated. He added that as per the revised vaccination guidelines, vaccines are now free for 18 plus across the country and people should be encouraged to get vaccinated.

“Media has always been a valuable partner in fighting the pandemic. Multi-stakeholder and sustained campaigns like COVID-19 vaccination have to effectively counter fake news/myths and the role of media becomes vital in countering myths,” the health secretary mentioned. He added that as we move forward, the need of the hour is to follow the five-pronged Strategy of COVID Appropriate Behaviour, Testing, Tracing, Treatment and Vaccination. "Considering the dynamic clinical nature of the SARS-COV2 virus, vaccination and COVID Appropriate Behaviour (CAB) consisting of wearing the mask properly, frequent hand washing and maintaining six feet distance remain the most important interventions to contain the pandemic," he said.

Giving a brief snapshot of the COVID strategy adopted by the Government of India, Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary, MoHF&W said that community participation is key to containing the virus. He added that the virus knows no boundaries and centre-state coordination and community involvement are of paramount importance in the collative and collaborative fight of the pandemic. As the country unlocks gradually, the risk of social and other gathering increases the potential chances of virus transmission, he said.

“Communication messages have become a blind spot for many people, which can create low-risk perception or simply go unheeded. We need to innovate our messaging and the media can play a great role in this,” he added.

Besides learning about the various reasons for vaccine hesitancy, which may be local and could vary for different community groups, the participating journalists also learnt about Adverse Event Following Immunization (AEFI), its management, and the best practices while reporting on AEFI.