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Eyestem Research hosts India's First Retinal Cell and Gene Therapy Summit at inStem

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Affordable gene and cell therapies need of the hour: Dr Kapil Bharti



Eyestem Research, a pioneering cell therapy company with a vision to democratise access to cutting-edge technologies for the bottom 99% of the global population, hosted the inaugural Foresight 2023 summit, India's first retinal cell and gene therapy conference. Held in Bengaluru on 17th and 18th August 2023, the Foresight 2023 summit was co-hosted by inStem (Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine) and C-CAMP (Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms).

India has over 1.5–2 million people suffering from incurable diseases such as dry age-related macular degeneration and retinitis pigmentosa. Foresight 2023 was intended to provide a spotlight on the diseases and enrich the Indian ecosystem by bringing in leaders in this field from India and abroad on a common platform.

With an aim to maximise India's potential as a go-to destination in the field of biotechnology, Foresight 2023 provided key stakeholders with a platform in the ecosystem to share their knowledge, insights, and research on retinal cell and gene therapy and build a collaborative and supportive community. The summit brought together renowned global experts and leaders so as to harness the power of the global collective in finding cures for some of the most pressing eye diseases plaguing humanity.

On this occasion, Dr Jogin Desai, CEO and Founder of Eyestem, said, "We were honoured to host Foresight 2023. Through collaboration and knowledge-sharing, we can drive innovation and create scalable platforms to address the unmet needs of patients globally. We hope that, by gathering together some brilliant minds under one single roof, this summit has helped in catalysing further discoveries and advancements in the treatment of retinal diseases."

The keynote speaker at the event was Dr Kapil Bharti, Scientific Director, National Eye Institute - National Institutes of Health, while Prof. David Gamm, Director, McPherson Eye Research Institute, University of Wisconsin, was the plenary speaker.

Dr Kapil Bharti said, "Currently available cell and gene therapies cost \$ 150,000 per dose. Eyestem's mission is to make such therapies affordable to a large part of the world. With a highly trained and effective team, they aim to reduce the overhead cost to make this ambition a reality. I am excited about their approach and will continue to guide them towards this mission as a member of their Scientific Advisory Board."

Image caption- (L-R) Dr Kapil Bharti, Scientific Director, National Eye Institute -National Institutes of Health, Dr Jogin Desai, CEO and Founder of Eyestem and Dr Taslimarif Saiyed, Director, C-CAMP (Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms).