



EPI HEALTH

DEPARTMENT OF EPIDEMIOLOGY & PUBLIC HEALTH
CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TAMIL NADU

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Message from the Co-ordinator, Dept. of EPH



Dr. Jayalakshmi Krishnan

Epidemiology and Public Health Department has taken a holistic approach in academic matters, same way as we take in the matter of Health, that encompasses academics, co-curricular activities, skill learning etc. The Department is pleased to bring out the second issue of the Newsletter

A focus of this edition is that it includes the interview with the Honourable Vice Chancellor Prof. A.P. Dash , who was also part of the World Health Organization.

I Wish good luck for successful publication of the second edition of Newsletter of EPH Department. I appreciate the editorial team and the students involved.

Message from the Editorial Team

The Editorial Board of the second issue of Epi Health is delighted to be a part of this initiative, which is a good platform to highlight the achievements and activities of the department of Epidemiology and Public Health. A section on recent government policies, programmes and events in the area of Public Health in India is also covered in this edition.

This newsletter aims to give a timely coverage of the programmes organized by the Department in the month of September and October.

A Huge thanks to all faculty, students and staff of the department who contributed to the Newsletter.

INTERVIEW WITH THE HONORABLE VICE CHANCELLOR PROF. A.P. DASH



Q. As one of the pioneers in the field of Malaria research and an inspiring scientist, can you please share with us more about your professional journey?

I will not consider myself as a pioneer. I strongly believe that learning is a lifetime process. My parents wanted me to become a doctor, but even though I had good score in my exams I couldn't get the admission as I was younger than the age limit. That is how I joined for B. Sc. Zoology and continued to pursue my Master, Doctorate and D. Sc. in Parasitology. After this, I was given a lot of options and I joined with ICMR in a Field Operational Research project on Malaria way back in 1978. Here I worked as a field biologist to find out cause for persistent transmission of Malaria in that region. Then I got the chance to work as Scientist at the Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC), which was an ICMR unit at Bhubaneswar. From there I joined as the Director of Institute of Life Sciences (ILS), Bhubaneswar in 1998. The momentous occasion was when the then Prime Minister of India, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee came to Bhubaneswar and dedicated the ILS, Bhubaneswar to the nation on 15th July 2003.

After completing my deputation period, I returned to ICMR as Director of the Regional Medical Research Centre, Jabalpur, now renamed as National Institute for Research in Tribal Health. There I could work in various unserved tribal areas. After a couple of years at Jabalpur I then went on to assume the Directorship of National Institute of Malaria Research (NIMR), New Delhi, where I had to rename and reorganize the institute. While working at NIMR, I was given the additional charge of Director of NIRTH, Jabalpur, CRME, Madurai and Desert Medicine Research Centre, Jodhpur. After working for half a century at NIMR, I got selected as Regional Advisor of the World Health Organization (SEARO). After my tenure at the WHO, I joined as the Distinguished Scientist Chair at the ILS Bhubaneswar for a small duration and then appointed as the Vice Chancellor of the Central University of Tamil Nadu in August 2015, and now I am here.

Q. Can you share your experiences in working with WHO?

I assumed the post of Advisor, Vector-borne diseases in SEARO, WHO. Later, I also got responsibility for other Neglected Tropical diseases. I was able to work on various diseases such as Lymphatic Filariasis, Visceral Leishmaniasis, Dengue, Chikungunya, Soil Transmitted Helminthiasis, Trachoma and Yaws etc. During my tenure countries like Maldives, Sri Lanka and Thailand reached the point of elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis. At the WHO, we also developed Guidelines for prevention and control of Dengue, Lymphatic Filariasis elimination and Kala-Azar elimination. The main advantage in working with WHO was that I could address the problems of many marginalized communities. Thus, I could work for the poorest of the poor who are often neglected. My experience at the WHO was quite exciting.

Q. Which was your most memorable experience as a scientist?

I have many memorable experiences, if I had to choose one it would be injustice to others. As an Institute Director, the happiest moment I can recall was 15th July 2003 when “The Prime Minister (PM) of India Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee dedicated the Institute of Life Sciences to the nation”.

ILS was established in the year 1989 as an autonomous institute under the administrative control of Govt. of Odisha. In 2002, it was taken over by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Govt. of India. The PM gave a very emotional speech and dedicated the institute to the nation. This was very satisfying to me. In general, my stints in every organization were very memorable in their own way.

Q. Since you are the visionary behind the establishment of our EPH department, how do you foresee the department of EPH in the next 10 years?

I am not a visionary; it's a very strong adjective for me. When I came here, some ten departments were functioning. So, I wanted to establish new departments. Along with conventional departments I wanted to have innovative departments also. Epidemiology & Public Health department was one amongst them. We have many programmes on Public Health across the country in many institutes and organizations including private ones; but nowhere there was a Masters programme on Epidemiology and Public Health. This programme here is one of its kind.

This Department has developed a unique curriculum which had inputs from international organisations like WHO and it was highly appreciated by peers. Public Health is a major concern in developing countries like India and in other Asian & African countries. I feel sorry to say that nobody in India thought public health until Bill Gates came to India and said you need public health & supported establishment of Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI). To make public health studies interesting and complete, Epidemiology should be added. If the curriculum is implemented properly and if things move well as expected, then Sky is not the limit for the graduates & scholars from this department

Q. Any Message for Students?

Honesty of labour always pays and single minded devotion brings in fabulous dividends. Have faith in time; time is the best side factor, which never betrays.

DEPARTMENT EVENTS

Department of EPH Students at Tharangam

A stunning Onam Festival, named as **Tharangam' 19** was celebrated in CUTN on 3rd September 2019, where the staff and the students dressed themselves in white Dhoti and white Saree and participated enthusiastically in various events.

Second year MSc. EPH students bagged first prize in Thiruvathira competition and second prize in group song competition. First year EPH students won first prize in Pookalam competition. Second year MSc EPH student Ms. Dhanyasree won first prize in solo song competition.



Special Lecture on Patent & IPR by Dr. Parthiban

Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, on 4th September, 2019 organized a special lecture on patenting & IPR. Dr. M. Parthiban PhD, (Freelance Researcher) was the resource person. The lecture was open for the School of Life-Sciences. Students gained knowledge on patenting a product, a process or an idea. It was an in-session where issues re- was discussed in detail.

formative and interactive related to drug patenting



Teacher's Day Celebration

On 5th September, 2019 the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health students celebrated teacher's day in respect of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, second President of India. The students expressed their gratitude towards the teachers. The teachers also addressed their beloved students with their experiences and motivational words. The teachers were honored with gifts and greeting cards made by the students. The event brought together the entire department and made the day



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Workshop & Hands-on-training on SPSS

Dr. Vishnuvardhan (Asst. Professor, Dpt. of Statistics, Pondicherry University) and Dr. Kumarapandian (Asst. Professor, Dpt. of Statistics, Madras Christian College) experts in the field of biostatistics were invited to conduct a two day workshop. The workshop was successfully held on 28th and 29th September, 2019. The portions covered were Explanatory Analysis, Parametric test, Non- Parametric test and univariate and bivariate analysis. Main focus was given on hands- on training of SPSS, which is very useful for students' dis-



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Dengue Awareness and Prevention

On 11th October, 2019, A Dengue prevention & awareness programme was organized. Dr. Bhasker, Former Senior Entomologist and presently guest faculty with the Dept. of EPH led the discussion and session. Programme started with inaugural speech by Dr. Jayalakshmi Krishnan, Co-ordinator of the Department of EPH. Documentary screening on Dengue was shown followed by the session handled by



Dr. Bhasker, where his presentation focused upon prevention & transmission.

Awareness Programme on Alzheimer's Disease

With the guidance of the Co-ordinator Dr. Jayalakshmi Krishnan, and other faculty, the student fraternity of the EPH department took the step to conduct a awareness programme on Alzheimer's Disease on 16th October, 2019, where senior citizens from various nearby area were invited for a Small Awareness (Guest Speakers Orations), Health Promotion (Videos /Presentations/ Meditation) and Interaction (Games) Session organized by the students of the EPH department. It was a successful event, where the objectives of awareness, health promotion and health education were fulfilled. The message on Alzheimer's reached various stakeholders and the students' expect it would bring a change in the quality of life of our senior citizens.



Prof. Srinivas, Dean of the Dept. of Community Medicine MGR Medical College, Tamil Nadu

Prof. Srinivas, Dean of the Dept. of Community Medicine MGR Medical College, Tamil Nadu visited



the Department of EPH and had an interactive session with the first and second year students. The session started with self-introduction and the students' area of interest in the course. He discussed about the courses being approved in their university like Master of Public Health in

Journalism and the works which are being granted by the UNICEF and some other special departments like Epidemiology, Immunology, Medical genetics. He has expressed interest to do joint internships in

Workshop on “Research Methodology & Biostatistics”

Dr. N. Sreekumaran Nair and Dr. K.T.Harichandrakumar from Department of Biometrics and Informatics (Biostatistics) JIPMER, Pondicherry led a two days workshop on Research Methodology and Biostatistics. Dr. Lekha D. Bhat introduced the speakers, followed by Dr. Jayalakshmi Krishnan (Co-ordinator, Dept. of EPH) introducing the theme. The workshop was very beneficial for upcoming project work and carrying out the research work.



Journal Club Presentations

13th September, 2019: Journal Club presentation by **Mr. Naveen Kodali (PhD Scholar)** on “Prevalence and risk factors of diabetes in a large community-based study in North India: results from a STEPS survey in Punjab, India”.

20th September, 2019: Journal Club presentation by **Mr. Nagarajan (PhD Scholar)** “A process for developing multisectoral strategies for zoonoses: the case of leptospirosis in Fiji”.

25th October, 2019: Journal Club presentation by **Ms. Neenumol Babu (PhD Scholar)** “Health Inequalities Research in India: a review of trends and themes in the Literature since 1990s”.

Field Visit

Second Year M.Sc. EPH students were divided into five groups and various groups was linked to one PHC, under the supervision of various faculty members. The field visits were conducted twice in the month of September on Fridays, ie. 30/08/2019 and 06/08/2019. First day three groups visited PHCs at Poonthottam, Thiruvarur Urban and Perumpanniyur.

The visit was an academically enriching experience. Students gained knowledge about the organizational set up of the PHC, regarding physical infrastructure, staffing pattern and facilities. The visit was also helpful in gathering the information about various National Health Programmes and State Government Health Programmes implemented through the PHCs. Students also got an opportunity to directly observe the training programmes conducted at PHCs and go through the rec-



Recent Developments in the field of Public Health

1. Rashtriya Poshan Maah

The month of September is observed as **Rashtriya Poshan Maah** by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. During this month activities related to nutrition awareness were carried out by all the states/UTs up to the grass root level. More than ten crore people are benefitted by this programme. The implementing departments /agencies like women and child development department through anganwadi workers, health and family welfare department through ASHA, ANM, primary health centres, community health centres, school education and literacy department through schools, panchayati raj department through panchayat, and rural development through self-help groups carried out the activities and spread the message during the month.



2. Ban on E-Cigarettes

Electronic-cigarettes are battery-operated devices that produce aerosol by heating a solution containing nicotine, which is the addictive substance in combustible cigarettes. These include all forms of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems, Heat Not Burn Products, e-Hookah and the like devices.

Impact of Prohibition of e-cigarettes

- It will ensure to protect population from use of e-cigarettes, especially the young generation.
- It will complement government's efforts for tobacco control
- It will help in decline of associated economic and disease burden

#BanOnEcigarettes

Website: <http://www.nhp.gov.in/>
Toll Free no.: 1800-180-1104

Implementation: Upon promulgation of the Ordinance, any production, manufacturing, import, export, transport, sale (including online sale), distribution or advertisement (including online advertisement) of e-cigarettes shall be a cognizable offence punishable with an imprisonment of up to one year or fine up to Rs. 1 lakh or both for the first offence; and imprisonment of up to three years and fine up to Rs. 5 lakh for a subsequent offence. Storage of electronic-cigarettes shall also be punishable with an imprisonment up to 6 months or fine up to Rs 50,000 or both.

Major Impact: The decision to prohibit e-cigarettes will help protect population, especially the youth and children, from the risk of addiction through E-cigarettes. Enforcement of the Ordinance will complement government's efforts for tobacco control and will help in reduction of tobacco use and reduction in associated economic and disease burden.

3. Mera Aspataal

Mera Aspataal is the Ministry of Health, Government of India initiative to capture patient feedback for the services received at the hospital through user-friendly multiple channels such as Short Message Service (SMS), Outbound Dialling (OBD) mobile application and web portal. The patient can submit the feedback in seven different languages on mobile app and web portal; for the hospitals visited in last seven days.

The patient can also check the already submitted feedback. The collected feedback will be com-

puted, analysed and visualized in the form of a dashboard accessible to the different stakeholders at facility, district, state and national level. My Hospital will help the government to take appropriate decisions for enhancing the quality of healthcare delivery across public facilities which will improve the patient's experience. The patient will be able to receive an effective and appropriate care. My Hospital will ultimately help establish patient driven, responsive and accountable healthcare system.



4. E- Raktkosh

E-Rakt Kosh enforces Drug & Cosmetic Act, National blood policy standards and guidelines ensuring proper collection & donation, effective management and monitoring the quality and quantity of the do-



nated blood. Considering the national roll out, e-Rakt Kosh has been developed with modular and scalable approach with configurable rule based architecture allowing customization to easily incorporate specific requirements from nationwide stakeholders.

Now people can check blood availability in Blood Banks and other relat-

ed services through e-RaktKosh which is available on UMANG App. This single App offers 362 services from 73 departments in 18 states.

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