

Press Release

World Hepatitis Day

28th July 2018

ILBS Launches Project Empathy on World Hepatitis Day

New Delhi, 28th July: Today on the occasion of World Hepatitis Day, **Dr. Guruprasad Mahapatra, Chairman, Airports Authority of India (AAI)** launched project **EMPATHY (Empowering People against Hepatitis)**, at a function organized in observation of World Hepatitis Day at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS). The function was also attended by **Sh. Sanjeev Kirwar, Secretary Health and Family Welfare**, Government of NCT Delhi, who inaugurated HepCare, a mobile app launched by ILBS on this occasion. The function was also attended by **Ms. Rumana Hamied, CEO Cipla Foundation**, and several dignitaries from government and corporate sector.

Viral Hepatitis affects nearly 325 million people worldwide; with nearly 60 million Indians suffering from this condition. Chronic Hepatitis B and C remain the leading causes for severe liver damage in the form of cirrhosis and liver cancer. Though there has been terrific advancement in areas of diagnostics and treatment modalities available for these conditions, there is much left to be desired when it comes to awareness about the disease & coverage of testing and treatment facilities. It is important to address these gaps so that we progress towards eliminating this disease

Project Empathy, a four year project being implemented by ILBS, is focused on empowering people against hepatitis. This comprehensive campaign aims to destigmatize Hepatitis and create an enabling environment for individuals with hepatitis and their families in India for social participation and care seeking. One arm of the project will be focused on generating awareness about Hepatitis B and C across India through sustained advocacy and tailored behavior change communication, and the other arm would be focused on creating a conducive policy environment. AAI of India would be funding this project under their CSR initiative.

HepCare, the mobile app launched by ILBS, can be used by any individual to assess his/her risk status for Viral Hepatitis in an anonymous fashion and the confidentiality of the details entered would be ensured. The app also contains key information about Viral Hepatitis that can be used to clarify the doubts of the population at large and would later be upgraded so that it would link patients to nearest centre where testing and treatment facilities would be available.

On the event held at ILBS, on the occasion of world hepatitis day, several other activities were undertaken, which included,

1. Hepatitis Training Program: Training program for more than 300 nurses on treatment of Viral Hepatitis under its ongoing program, "PROJECT PRAKASH", which is funded by Cipla Foundation under their CSR policy
2. Liver Screening Camp: Free Liver Screening camp for Hepatitis B and C for pre-registered at-risk individuals was organized. This included free testing would include, HBsAG, Anti-HCV antibody, Fibro scan, serum cholesterol and serum ALT. More than 300 people were screened at the camp

3. Free Screening for healthcare workers: Free Anti HBsAg titre check for nurses was organised where in more than 200 nurses were offered free screening
4. Vaccination Camp : Hepatitis B vaccination camp for at risk population was organised

Speaking on the occasion, **Director ILBS Dr SK Sarin** expressed regret that children get this disease from their mothers for no fault of theirs. He exhorted everyone to "Be Aware and Make Aware" and to take a pledge to get every new born vaccinated. He requested the government to make Hepatitis a notifiable disease and stop discrimination of the infected. He emphasized that despite liver being accountable for majority of diseases, yet other organs like the heart get more public attention.

About Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences

The Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences is an Autonomous Super-speciality, Medical-cum-Research Institute for treatment of Liver and Biliary diseases under Government of NCT of Delhi. Since inception, the Institute has been making sincere endeavor to attain the bench mark of the best available quality parameters towards delivery of advance healthcare in the public domain at affordable costs.

In January 2012 ILBS achieved the distinction of being the first Autonomous Super-Specialty institute in the country to be awarded the prestigious "**NABH Accreditation**" by the National Accreditation Board for hospital and Healthcare Providers in recognition of its outstanding compliance with the stringent national and international standards aimed towards patient safety and delivery of **Excellence in Quality Healthcare**. In 2013 it also achieved the NABL accreditation for its laboratory services. It is the first autonomous super specialty institute under GNCT of Delhi to be accredited by NABH and NABL.
