



INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

Department of Health Research – Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Government of India

Press Release

ICMR Signs Declaration of Intent with Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation & NIH to build on ongoing research and training capacity

Bill Gates presents ICMR Lifetime Achievement Awards

17th November 2019, New Delhi

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the apex body in India for health research signed a Declaration of Intent (DoI) with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAD) of the National Institutes of Health, USA and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). This Declaration of Intent builds on an ongoing collaborative research and training program between India and US, including enhancement of research capacity. The Declaration of Intent was exchanged in the presence of US Ambassador Mr Kenneth I. Juster and Mr. Bill Gates, Co-Chair, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The collaboration will establish a research fellowship programme for young scientists in India and US to expand research that will advance discovery to improve clinical practice and benefit public health in both countries. The initial focus of this fellowship programme is intended to engage scientists in infectious disease and immunology research, with an emphasis on diseases that affect women and children.

During the event, which also marked the celebration of 108th Foundation day of ICMR, Mr Gates also presented *ICMR Lifetime Achievement Award for Outstanding Achievement in Healthcare* to three game-changers of the country in the field of Health: *Dr Cyrus S. Poonawalla*, Chairman and Managing Director, Serum Institute of India; *Dr Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw*, Chairman and Managing Director, Biocon India and *Dr Prakash Baba Amte*, Director, *Lok Biradari Prakalp*. The awardees have been recognized for their efforts in providing better health care to people in the country and globally through innovative diagnostics, cost-effective life-saving tools and increasing access to healthcare at the grassroots.

The Standard Treatment Workflows (STWs) of India developed with the goal of empowering primary, secondary and tertiary care physicians/surgeons towards achieving the goal of Universal Health Coverage were also released on the occasion by Mr. Bill Gates, Dr. V. K. Paul, Dr. Balram Bhargava & Dr. Indu Bhushan. STWs will facilitate the successful implementation of *Ayushman Bharat* in the country.

Commenting on the importance of the collaborative fellowship programme with NIH and BMGF, Prof (Dr.) Balram Bhargava, Secretary, Department of Health Research and Director General, ICMR said, “There are great benefits in investing in research, especially in areas of infectious diseases and immunology, which will help the world in combating some of the debilitating diseases of the world. ICMR is aggressively working towards major advances in preventing, treating, and curing diseases. This collaboration will give us a boost in finding cures that will make lives healthy and productive, not only in India but across the world.”

Bill Gates, Co-Chair, BMGF said, “The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is committed to working collaboratively with the ICMR to provide support in development of solutions to some of the major health challenges facing India and the world”.

About ICMR: *The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi, the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research, is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world. ICMR’s research agenda align with the National health priorities. These efforts are undertaken with a view to reduce the total burden of disease and to promote health and well-being of the population. ICMR promotes biomedical research in the country through intramural as well as extramural research. Visit us at <http://icmr.gov.in>*

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