



**Association of Indian Universities  
Roundtable of Vice Chancellors  
of Health Sciences Universities  
October 10-11, 2017**



Organized by  
Sri Venkateswara Institute of Medical Sciences, Tirupati  
In Commemoration of its Silver Jubilee Year

**Minutes of Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, Dy. Director General of WHO – Key note speaker for the Inaugural session speech at AIU Roundtable of Vice-Chancellors of Health Universities conclave on 10.11.2017 at SVIMS, Tirupati**

- She thanked the Director cum VC of SVIMS Dr.T.S.Ravikumar for having organized the round table of VCs of health Universities, the second one in 10 years. She hoped that it will not take another 10 years before such conclave is organized because of its importance.
- She said that as VCs of health Universities they have major role in shaping the future of medical Education in the country and any acts of omissions and commissions will have impact on large number of our students.
- She shared her observations and reflections on the status of current medical education especially on research.
- The MCI is undergoing for major reforms. National Medical Commission bill was cleared by the cabinet yet to be passed by the parliament. She wanted voice of the VCs must be heard and hoped that many VCs might have gone through the bill. She advised to submit their comments on the bill.
- There is need for forming Regional medical councils maintaining quality and excellence in their own region and do the accreditation and there should be healthy competition among these medical councils and also to monitor inequality of distribution of medical colleges and universities between south, North and north East as in north and north east regions there are only few medical colleges when compared to the majority in the south. This gap is going to be gradually corrected. The Exchange of ideas between the well-

established Universities with those of developing universities will be more useful.

- Curriculum of UG and PG needs to be harmonized with international standards from the sort of stagnated medical standards in MBBS which is Compressed to complete in a short period of time.
- The students have to get out of the old concept of rote learning and really learn medicine as it applies to people because it is also linked with the research. It is linked to having a questioning mind.
- In Medical schools the paradigm of learning has to be changed. We need to encourage students to ask questions with guidance from Teachers. A more question based learning will lead to research. Unless the students start questioning the existing state of knowledge they cannot undertake research for new knowledge.
- It is time to go beyond descriptive research. If you don't have the right question in mind and questioning irrelevantly and questioning for which answers already exists is not going to help us in doing research. But She opined that most of today's research falls under this category.
- She advised the Students, teachers and researchers to differentiate between good and bad publications before offering their research article for publication. coming to research publications she opined that Credit should be given to publication in a peer reviewed journal with impact factor as one of the important variables. Not going by numbers and quantity but by quality of the journal and by real-time metrics to measure quality.
- Samarannandi published a paper documenting that out of 550 medical colleges with UG and PG in the country, 57% have not published even a single paper for the last 10 years from 2005 to 2014 . out of 40% of research output only 4% has come from medical colleges. 25 medical colleges are publishing a reasonable work. Even the AIIMS is far behind the Harvard Medical School in research publications.

- She appreciated China , though equal in economy with us are far ahead in research of quality and in quantity. China has been investing huge funds during the last 10 years more on infrastructure, education, Science and R&D and in fact it brought back its Doctors and Scientists from abroad with more attractive incentives and research facilities. It is time to adopt China model in creating infrastructure for research. Though they are not good at English but that had not stopped them from doing good and large research as they improved English learning among researchers.
- The Department of Health Research was formed in 2007 out of need to expand and strengthen the healthresearch in thecountry. The Viral Diagnostic Research Labs were started under DHR funding to report on the viral infections like dengue , N1 H1, H3 N2, hepatitis, chicken guniya, zika etc. Though the Labs are good to pick up the diseases but She was critical that there was no research output to create data base sequence about the geographical spread, seasonal spread of these viral infections. She opined that In Future viral infections are going to be critical for which good surveillance system of research is needed.
  - 45 Multi Disciplinary Rural Units are functioning under DHR and it is planned to set up 80 MRUs in medical Colleges to enable to Faculty Doctors to under take research. She felt that nodal officers are important in coordinating the activities.
- (MRHRU) Model Rural Health Research Units are set up at PHC or CHC level in rural area affiliated to one of the local medical colleges to undertake research in rural areas and to document data. There is a Network of 24 MRHRU in different areas for mentoring to undertake research in rural areas and document through District surveillance cell.
- The Medical Universities can look into research on health impact in view implementation of Open Defecation free scheme under Prime Minister's Swatchabharath mission.

- The Medical Universities can look into research on health impact in view of replacing of solid fuel with LPG under prime minister's Ujjwal scheme.
- The Medical universities should link with other social sciences departments like Economics, psychology, Sociology etc . for better research results in implementation research, operational research, public health research, downstream research.
- She spoke of priorities of ICMR and Department of Health Research. The Five Pillars for research activities for the vision 2030;
  - i) Cantering of Medical Research capacity
  - ii) Data warehousing and data repositories
  - iii) Implementation research
  - iv) Evidence policy translation
  - v) Rebridging traditional knowledge systems.
- Department of Health Research is trying to increase funding for research, allocating Rs.250 crores this financial year.
- She opined that the Universities should create funding for research.
- She wanted Doctors to be advocates for research in their institutions and for the entire field of medical research.
- Finally cause of death vital statistics. CRBS system in India is very poor at a low level as reported by WHO. Only 10% of deaths are recorded. The medical records to be documented. It is better to have one person specially allocated for this job it can be even by a nurse. The Doctors should learn ICD 10 coding. The rural deaths happening at Home are also to be documented.
- She was appreciative of Director-cum-VC Dr.T.S.Ravikumar's efforts in making quality of performance of the Institution public specially the hospital infections voluntarily through their web site which should be emulated by other universities.

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