To deal with the health care challenges in urban areas of India, the government has approved the National Urban Health Mission, a dedicated public health delivery with focus on the poor living in urban slums. The government’s Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) has cleared Rs 20,000 crore for NUHM which will be launched soon across the country. The mission is expected to cover cities and towns with over 50,000 people, which would come to around 779 cities. The NUHM will finally be a part of the National Health Mission, which will take care of both rural and urban health needs of the people in the country.

DCGI TO LAUNCH MONITORING ACTIVITIES OF MEDICAL DEVICES SECTOR

The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) is going to launch a nationwide drive that will check the operations of medical devices sector. This will guarantee the safety and efficacy of products produced by them. Steps will be taken by DCGI to ensure that the companies follow all the required norms, rules and regulations as mentioned under the law. A consideration is been given on introduction of Drugs, Cosmetics and Medical Devices Bill in the Parliament in the coming winter session. Once the bill is passed by the Parliament, the Drugs and Cosmetics (D&C) Act will be amended to Drugs, Cosmetics and Medical Device Act.
In a major move aimed at checking unnecessary medical tests and procedures, the Ministry of Health is planning to make it mandatory for all private hospitals to display and declare the treatment costs of different diseases. The aim would be to standardize the treatment costs for major procedures and categorize hospitals according to it. There will be guidelines that will be introduced under the Clinical Establishment (Registration and Regulation) Act 2010. These guidelines would give a boost to evidence based approach to treatment.

**CHANGES PLANNED BY GOI IN THE RULES FOR CLINICAL TRIALS**

The Government of India is contemplating major changes in the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and its rules. These would make it mandatory for the investigators to report all serious adverse events, including deaths, to the Drugs Controller General of India (DGCI), as well as the Sponsor and the Ethics Committee, within twenty-four hours of occurrence. Also it will be mandatory for the sponsor to provide medical care to the person who suffers injury during trial, for as long as required.

**HEALTH MINISTRY PASSES ORDERS TO PROMOTE GENERIC MEDICINES**

Medicines from now on may not be sold under brand names in India. It is the biggest move to push generic drugs and do away with brand names. The Union Health Ministry has ordered states to stop issuing licence for the manufacture and sale of drugs on the basis of their brand name. All pharmaceutical firms applying for licence to market or manufacture fixed dose combination (FDC) drugs, will have to submit their generic names and not as brands. The move will substantially reduce medicines’ prices.

**GLOBAL NEWS**

**UNICEF AND ROTARY ON “GLOBAL POLIO ERADICATION”**

UNICEF called for continued dedication in eradicating Polio and also applauded India for being ‘declared Polio free’ for the first time in history. UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake on World Polio Day said that the world must concentrate its efforts in reaching the most vulnerable children, those with disabilities, living in extreme poverty and in conflict zones in remote areas. In related news, Rotary International also cautioned India that a funding gap of $700 million in the Polio Program can halt all progress achieved so far against the dreaded disease.

**UN LAUNCHES GLOBAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILD MARRIAGE**

A global campaign has been launched by United Nations to put an end to the still prevalent social practice of child marriage throughout the world. Marrying early, between 15-19 years can cause complications in pregnancy and child birth. Child marriage denies children of their education and health rights and adversely affects their mental well-being. It has been decided to designate October 11, as International
Girl Child Day to emphasize the importance to put girl child’s right at the centre of development. UNFPA has decided to invest from now on in a more systematic and integrated way to support married and unmarried girls aged between 10-18 years.

**ITU AND WHO LAUNCH M-HEALTH INITIATIVE TO COMBAT NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and WHO have launched a new partnership called the ‘m-Health’ Initiative to use mobile technology, in particular text messaging and applications, to help combat non communicable diseases (NCDs) such as Diabetes, Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases and Chronic Respiratory Diseases. The ITU-WHO m-Health Initiative, which will initially run for a four year period and focus on prevention, treatment and enforcement to control non communicable diseases, will work with partnerships at both international and national levels.

**RECENT RESEARCHES**

**ASPIRIN MAY HELP TREAT SOME COLON CANCERS: STUDY**

According to a study published in New England Journal of Medicine, Aspirin has shown remarkable promise in treating Colon Cancer in people with mutations in a gene. Dr. Andrew Chan of Massachusetts General Hospital and others researchers from Harvard Medical School, who led the study, have stated that this simple medicine might be the cheapest gene targeting therapy ever found for Cancer. About one-sixth of all Colon Cancer patients have the mutated gene and might be helped by Aspirin.

**ONSET OF PUBERTY DROPS DOWN TO TEN YEARS: STUDY**

According to studies published in journals like American Academy of Paediatrics and Danish journal, Paediatrics, there is an early onset of puberty among girls and boys occurring in the past many decades, which is becoming a point of concern. According to the researchers, the average age of the onset of puberty in girls was 16.6 years in 1860. This had dropped to 14.6 in 1920, 13.1 in 1950, 12.5 in 1980 and 10.5 in 2010. Similar trends have been reported in boys, with a delay of one year. Doctors have given many reasons for this like obesity, environmental components like chemicals in air, diet rich in sugar and fat, and reduced physical activity.

**ANTI-OXIDANT IN TOMATOES HELPS CUT RISK OF STROKE: A STUDY**

A study published in the journal, Neurology, has stated that eating tomatoes and tomato-based food can halve the risk of Stroke. This is due to the antioxidant called Lycopene present in tomatoes. Researchers found that out of the 1031 men included in the study, those with the highest levels of Lycopene were 59 per cent less likely to have Stroke than those with the lowest levels. This study supports already existing evidence that a diet high in fruits and vegetables is associated with a lower risk of Stroke.
A BRIEF REVIEW ON ALUMINUM MEET AT IIHMR NEW DELHI

The first “Inaugural Alumni Meet” was organized at IIHMR Delhi campus on October 7th, 2012. The meet was started in the presence of Dr. L P Singh, Director, IIHMR Delhi. Ms. Anupama Sharma who is one of the faculty members of IIHMR Delhi, Executive Committee of IDAA along with other faculty members of IIHMR Delhi.

The day was commenced by welcoming the alumni by the Director and followed by the interaction of alumni with the final year graduating batch of IIHMR Delhi. The large number of queries in relation to interviews during the placement was also addressed.

Dr. L P Singh, in his speech, highlighted the purpose of the Alumni Association. He stressed upon strengthening of the alumni network and recommended frequent planned interactions in a calendar year. He also extended administrative support such as free accommodation for facilitation of the same.

Ms. Anupama, expressed her pleasure in being part of the meet. While addressing to the alumni, she elaborated on the much needed efforts required to define the goals and purpose of this association and suggested on charting out list of annual activities of IDAA.

Dr. Sourabh Sinha, President IDAA, paid his tribute to IIHMR society, Dr. M.L. Mehta and Dr. V.K. Singh (Ex-Director) for their constant support in forming IDAA. He informed that IDAA has been registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

The following discussions were carried out during the course of the event:

- General body meeting should be held twice a year. It was suggested to keep first Sunday of October in every year for alumni activities which would be named as “Alumni Day”.
- Inclusion of community participation and social responsibility, outreach activities, and to design a strategic plan to channelize with media for the coverage of these planned activities.
- Carrying out activities like family adoption, donations and awareness campaigns, promoting health packages, joint research and proposal development to approach donor partners, organizing seminars/workshops and MDPs.
- Publishing of newsletters, where alumni can contribute to the newsletters in the form of articles based on their experiences.
- Strategy to be adopted for leveraging social media which will be done through merging all the existing sites on Facebook.

Dr. Niraj Dave, Secretary of IDAA, gave vote of thanks to all the alumni for devoting their valuable time and precious suggestions. The meet ended in much fervor among all along with the commitment for adding meaning and purpose to the association.