

News from the IIHMR Delhi Campus

Training program on Laparoscopic Tubal ligation in India

was organized by IIHMR Delhi from August 8- 17, 2018. Ten participants from Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Bangladesh attended the training. The basic objective of the course was for participants to learn laparoscopic tubal ligation and share their experiences on laparoscopic surgical techniques with surgeons and gynaecologists in India. The participants were given a brief about the history of laparoscopic surgery and were introduced to the laparoscopic tubal ligation program of India. They were also given classroom demonstration on laparoscopic instruments and use of the laproscator .

Besides the classroom teaching, the participants visited three major hospitals i.e. Max Hospital, Saket, Venkateshwara Hospital and Aakash Hospital, Dwarka. In each hospital the participants had an extended interaction with surgeons and shared their experiences. They were also taken to Operation theaters to observe live surgeries.

The participants appreciated the course and also expressed satisfaction with stay and other arrangements.

A workshop on Climate Resilient Health Systems (CRHS)

took place from the 1st to the 3rd of September, 2018 at the International Institute of Health Management Research, New Delhi. The workshop was supported by the National Institutes of Health, USA, the World Health Organization, Country Office for India and IPE Global. The Indian Meteorological Society served as a knowledge partner for the event. The objective of the workshop was to build leadership and management capacity in professionals working in the health sector, for the development and implementation of climate resilient health systems. Ten individuals were trained during the workshop, which included working professionals from Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh and West Bengal and Two Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) Officers from National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). Resource persons included experts in various areas including leadership, health policy, vulnerability assessment, resilience and disease management. The highlight of the workshop was a visit to the Centre of Excellence for Climate Change & Vector Borne Diseases which included a tour and orientation of the lab facilities.



Faculty Publications and Research

Dr. Preetha Gopinath, Professor, IIHMR Delhi & **Dr. Pradeep Panda**, Dean, Academics, IIHMR, Delhi, have co-authored the following research article- **“Self-reported quit rates and quit attempts among subscribers of a mobile text messaging-based tobacco cessation programme in India”**, in BMJ Innovations.

Access free full text here: <https://innovations.bmj.com/content/early/2018/07/25/bmjinnov-2018-000285>

ABSTRACT: In 2015, as part of the WHO and International Telecommunication Union’s ‘Be Healthy Be Mobile’ initiative using mobile technology to combat non-communicable diseases, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology in India developed a short text message-based mobile health programme (the ‘mCessation’ programme) to support tobacco users to quit tobacco use. **Objectives :** To evaluate the effectiveness of the mCessation programme by estimating quit rates and quit attempts among registered subscribers of the programme and to understand subscriber perceptions of the programme.

Dr. Sanjiv Kumar, Director, IIHMR Delhi & **Dr. Satish Gupta**, Adjunct Faculty, IIHMR Delhi, have co-authored the commentary- **Urban Health: Needs Urgent Attention**, in the Indian Journal of Public Health. Article can be accessed at:

<http://www.ijph.in/article.asp?issn=0019-557X;year=2018;volume=62;issue=3;spage=214;epage=217;aulast=Kumar>

ONGOING FACULTY RESEARCH PROJECTS

Climate Variability, Human Health Impact and Economic Burden in Tribal Communities of selected Geographical Regions in India

Team: Dr. Vinay Tripathi, Prof. Rais Akhtar, Dr. Preetha GS and Dr. Pradeep Panda

There is a wider consensus among the scientific community as well as policy makers that climate change is taking place due to anthropogenic causes and is going to impact every one and every sphere of human life including health. Tribal communities are most vulnerable to climate change and its impact. In Indian context, studies conducted among tribals in relation to climate change are limited, particularly those which reflects on tribal perception about climate change, its health and economic impacts. This study, funded by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, focuses on these aspects. The three-year long study, which started in April 2017, adopts a mixed method approach and uses participatory tools and techniques. The study is being conducted in five states of India, namely, Jammu & Kashmir, Meghalaya, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Kerala.

PGDHM STUDENT ACTIVITY UPDATE- AUGUST 2018

On Saturday, 18th August 2018, the IIHMR Delhi hosted Aadhaar-2018, the Annual Foundation Day event, with 2018 marking the 10th year of IIHMR Delhi’s excellence in Health Management. The Institute was honoured to have as Chief Guest, **Shri Manoj Jhalani**, Additional Secretary and the Mission Director (National Health Mission / Ayushman Bharat), who also addressed the gathering about his association with IIHMR University and his involvement with the Ayushman Bharat programme and the future challenges and scope for health management in India. He also released the 7th State of Institute Report of IIHMR.

Shri Ashok Agarwal, Founder Trustee, IIHMR Group of Institutions was Guest of Honour and also addressed the gathering. The highlight of the evening was the colourful and energetic cultural performances by the PGDHM students.



The month of August also saw the induction of the 11th batch of students under the PGDHM Programme. They were warmly welcomed by students, faculty and staff and a fresher's party function was organised for them by the Second Year students, with lively and fun activities and games, followed by high tea. Mr and Miss Fresher's were also announced.



Keeping hands on training and real life experience in mind, one day field visits were organised for the Second year PGDHM students. The students specialising in Hospital Management visited Venkateshwar Hospital, Dwarka and got first-hand experience of the various departments and their functioning. The students specialising in Health Management and Health IT Management visited the NIHFV (National Institute for Health and Family Welfare) Campus, Munirka and got the opportunity to visit and interact with the employees of the National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC), the Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS) Call Centre and the National Cold Chain and Vaccine Management Resource Centre (NCCVMRC), housed within the campus.



Abhimanyu Singh Chauhan

Batch of 2009-2011, IIHMR , Delhi

Qualitative Researcher,

Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), India

& Doctoral Fellow, School of Public Health, Dept. of Medicine,

University of Leige and Institute of Tropical Medicine,

Antwerp, Belgium



What was your career path that led you to your current position?

Health Management is a very broad domain. I was interested to pursue health research since the very beginning. During the first few months of my tenure at PHFI, I realized that the importance of publications (scientific writing) for a successful career in health research, but certainly, only after acquiring other necessary skill sets. For this, I explored various possibilities and by working at the Junior Level in various short term projects at PHFI, I was able to acquire these skills. Three years after my graduation from IIHMR, Delhi, keeping my blend of skills and specialisation in mind, I decided to specialize in medical anthropology. In the past 8 years, I have been learning the subject through the 'learning- by-doing method' under the guidance of renowned, practicing anthropologists. I have published over 40 high impact factor papers in PubMed Indexed journals, 1 book and 2 book chapters. I also worked as short term consultant with Eco Health Alliance (Country lead – Human behavioural Surveillance for PREDICT project), WHO-South-East Asia Regional Office for Public Health Situation Assessment (PHSA) for Bangladesh-Myanmar Rohingya conflict etc. I was awarded Nuffic Fellowship by Netherlands government in 2017. I am also a PHFI-ILRI Research Capacity Building Programme (RCBP) awardee for doctoral programme, funded by IDRC, Canada. Presently, I am working as a Qualitative Researcher with PHFI, Gurugram, India.

Could you describe your typical workday?

I am a junior level researcher in transition to a mid-level researcher; so typically, the deliverables includes developing research proposals, writing and reviewing manuscripts, as well as administrative responsibilities. I try to wrap up the administrative issues in first two hours of the day and spend rest 6-7 hours for technical work. Familiarity with published literature is crucial for existence or for survival, to be precise! Considering the work load, I can manage to read 1/2 article(s) a day. However, to keep abreast with latest findings, I keep 2-3 hours over weekend to read the latest publications in my field. On an average, I read 10 new articles every week.

What educational preparation would you recommend for someone who wants to advance in this field?

I would advise any fresh graduate to identify an area of interest and develop an expertise in the same, over the course of time. There are ample opportunities in the field of public health research, but the only problem is the lack of adequate skill sets! Organizations continuously struggle to find a suitable candidate for higher order, technical work. In other words, a PhD is a must! There is no alternative to it. In my opinion, work for 3-4 years, identify your area(s) of interest and enroll in a doctoral program. India has an extreme shortage of public health researchers. Try to prepare for exams like GREs-mainly and IELTS etc. during your IIHMR phase. These are mandatory for application to a doctoral institute of repute, worldwide.

How do you see this field changing in the near future?

In my opinion, the research projects are turning more complex, integrated and moving from multi-disciplinary to transdisciplinary approach, and there will be a huge demand for the niche expertise in the future. To make it clear, the upcoming or niche domains that will be in demand are medical statistics, health economics, infectious disease modelling, medical anthropology, medical geography and health IT. First three may not sound new, but the talent acquisition is still a big challenge. A degree from IIHMR D will give you a very good platform to enter in the field of public health research. However, it's just the start of journey. Awaited will be the specialization and/or super specialization at second masters and/or doctoral level, respectively.

Dr Nitish Dogra

Associate Professor, IIHMR, Delhi

Modules supervised: Disaster Management,
Clinical Epidemiology



For how long have you been associated with the IIHMR family?

I have been associated with the IIHMR family since 2009, initially as a Visiting Faculty teaching the very first batch of the Institute. I joined as an Assistant Professor in October 2009. I was at IIHMR, Delhi in this capacity till April 2014. In April 2017 I had the opportunity to return to the Institute as an Associate Professor.

Could you elaborate upon your Professional and Work Experience?

I am a physician by training with an MD in physiology from the Vallabhbhai Patel Chest Institute, University of Delhi. In 2005 I acquired a Master of Public Health Degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, United States, widely considered as the world's foremost institution of learning in the field of public health. More recently in 2013 I was selected as a Fulbright-Nehru Environmental Leadership Program Fellow by the United States Department of State and the Government of India. For the duration of this fellowship I had the privilege of being hosted by the Morton K. Blaustein Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Johns Hopkins University as a Visiting Faculty.

My work experience of over 15 years relates to environmental health. This includes work at the international, bilateral, national and state level. In particular I have had the privilege of working with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), United States in different capacities.

What you are most proud of?

In July 2010 I was invited on behalf of IIHMR, Delhi to present a proposal on Vulnerability and Adaptation for Climate and Health at the Costa Rica Consultation organized by WHO. The meeting involved 15 countries worldwide which carried out studies under a common protocol. This in turn led to the first global guides on the subject (<https://tinyurl.com/ClimateHealthCostaRica>) where I was glad to serve as a contributing author. Our study carried out in 2011, with participation of health management students and under the overall supervision of Dr. Sanjiv Kumar, our present Director and then Dean responsible for Research, is recognized as a landmark contribution to the field of Climate and Health. However personally what I am most proud of was the fact that at Costa Rica in the absence of any representative from the Government, on request from WHO, I had the supreme honour of representing India and presenting the country status at the meet.

What is the best thing about your job?

Undoubtedly the best thing about one's job at IIMR is that faculty autonomy is paramount. This is a fundamental principle which is advocated at the highest management level. As an example, in most medical colleges of the country it would be quite unlikely for a faculty member in his 30s or early 40s to lead an international agency supported project.

What are some important attributes of a good instructor?

A good instructor should be able to explain complex concepts in a simple manner, engaging students through multiple modalities as well as ensuring critical and creative thinking in a fun-filled participatory learning environment.

What professional development activities have you been involved with, over the past few years?

In the past few years apart from academic activities, I have been involved in research, training, consultancy and advocacy related to environmental health. The activities range from projects to workshops to community initiatives and newspaper articles.

In particular I would like to highlight two initiatives which I have spearheaded over the last few years. After returning from my Fulbright Fellowship, I co-founded the Green Fulbrighters Forum in 2015, India's first discipline specific Fulbright forum which involves US scholars also. Also in the same year I served as convenor of the UCHAI training workshop (Understanding Climate and Health Associations in India) cosponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), United States. This to date has been the largest systemic capacity building on the subject. UCHAI has now transformed into a repository and professional network with an advisory group headed by Dr. Sanjiv Kumar, Director, IIMR, New Delhi.

What are your current research interests?

Health impacts of climate change, disasters and air pollution

Describe a situation in which you did all the right things and were still unsuccessful. What did you learn?

About 5 years ago a few of us at the Institute entered into a case study contest organized by a leading research agency. We were shortlisted and offered a contract. From our side we did all the right things but as the case study evolved there seemed to be differences in what we came up with and what the funding agency wanted. Ultimately the case study submission was unsuccessful. It was very disheartening for all of us. We gave up on the idea. A few months ago we revived the idea with another agency while working with the most appropriate collaborators and available technology. Our current proposal is successful. As late President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam said "FAIL means First Attempt In Learning!"

What are some new skills you have acquired in the past one year?

Lessons in the past year have come through involvement as a State level Expert for Longitudinal Aging Study in India (LASI), the world's largest longitudinal study for the elderly- Screening of dementia and other associated factors; Training of field staff in simplified local language; Supervision of large scale study.

A message for our readers

Sorry if this sounds straight from Bollywood.....in life there are always two paths, one easy and one tough. In the tough path you will always find far more difficulties in the beginning but in the long run you will always benefit. From the career point of view, for one, there will be fewer people in the race! But beware, don't ever get too comfortable. Life is a treadmill where you have to work harder and harder to stay in the same place!

UN agrees on global plan to battle TB

UN member-states on September 14 agreed on a global plan to step up the fight against tuberculosis, the world's number one killer among infectious diseases, settling a row with the United States over access to cheap drugs. Following weeks of tough negotiations, the text of a final declaration won approval and will be formally adopted at the first-ever TB summit on September 26, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting in New York. [Click here to read the full article.](#)

Source- The Hindu. Date – Sep 16, 2018, Section – Healthcare, Author-AFP

EMA working on single App for healthcare

Like dial 108 for medical emergency, the Emergency Medicine Association (EMA) and Academic College of Emergency Experts (ACEE) are working on having a single App that connects to a host of Apps dealing with emergency and healthcare aspects, said EMA Principal Secretary Vimal Krishnan. [Click here to read the full article.](#)

Source- The Hindu. Date – Sep 17, 2018, Section – Healthcare IT, Author- Special Correspondent.

New policy forum to enhance India-UK healthcare collaborations

The BAPIO India-UK Healthcare Policy Forum, launched at the Indian High Commission will harness the contribution made by an estimated 60,000 Indian-origin doctors to the UK's state-funded National Health Service (NHS) and influence healthcare initiatives in both countries. [Click here to read the full article.](#)

Source- The Pioneer. Date -9 Aug, 2018, Section – India Abroad, Author-PTI

Modi's major healthcare scheme from Sep 25

According to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a major healthcare initiative to give medical insurance cover to 50 crore Indians will roll out from September 25 -- the 102nd birth anniversary of Bharatiya Jana Sangh founder Deendayal Upadhyay.. [Click here to read the full article.](#)

Source- The Pioneer. Date -15 Aug, 2018, Section – Health And Fitness, Author-IANS

India made rapid progress in increasing access to sanitation in schools: UN

India has made rapid progress in increasing access to sanitation in schools, the United Nations said in a report, noting that the proportion of schools without any sanitation facility has decreased at a fast pace in the country. [Click here to read the full article.](#)

Source- The Pioneer. Date -3 Sep, 2018, Section – Health And Fitness, Author-PTI.

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