

More return on investment: two more states initiate private practitioners' capacity enhancement workshops for improving RMNCH+A services

After Uttarakhand, two more states, Delhi and Jharkhand have initiated workshops for private practitioners to address key gaps in implementing government endorsed protocols in private facilities and improving public-private as well as private-private interface for better reach and quality of RMNCH services for most vulnerable populace. Under Vridhhi, JSI has been successful in tapping the expertise of national and state associations of gynaecologists and obstetricians, neonatologists and paediatricians (FOGSI, NNF and IAP) in technical and operational capacity building of private practitioners. The state government's participation in planning has been facilitated in all states; government representation in the workshops was witnessed in both Uttarakhand and Delhi.

In Jharkhand, the first training for 20 private practitioners held in Ranchi is a stepping stone to reach over 400 FOGSI members and 342 IAP members. The opening session moderated by Dr. Sudhir Maknikar (Project Director, JSI) and led by Dr. Ajay Gambhir (NNF) and Dr. Gorakh Mandrupkar (FOGSI) set the objectives of the workshop. Dr. Jaya Swarup (IPE Global) oriented the participants about Vridhhi to contextualize the need of these workshops in the "big picture".



Opening session led by representatives of NNF (Dr. Gambhir), FOGSI (Dr. Mandrupkar), ROGSI (Dr. Renuka Sinha) and IAP (Dr. Amit Kumar Sharma).

The master trainers from NNF, FOGSI (Dr. Gambhir and Dr. Mandrupkar) along with Dr. Maknikar (JSI), Dr. Renuka Sinha (President, ROGSI) and Dr. Amit K. Sharma (IAP) emphasised the need to comply with government endorsed standard treatment protocols and clarified participants' concerns on the same. Dr. Amit Mohan (JSI) along with the master trainers facilitated group work for detailed discussions on the available guidelines and measures to improve compliance on these in private facilities. The workshop instilled confidence in strengthening private-public partnership and resulted in five private practitioners volunteering for quality improvement technical support including updates on government guidelines, setting goals for quality improvement and meeting accreditation criteria. JSI is in process of facilitating establishment of a PPP cell in the state; a proposal for scale-up of life saving newborn care interventions with engagement of private providers has already been shared.

In Delhi, the workshop was held under the aegis of Dr. J.P. Kapoor (Director, Family Welfare, Delhi). Dr. Kapoor was categorical about weak linkages between public and private sector health care providers.



Dr. J.P. Kapoor (Director, Family Welfare, Delhi) sharing pearls of wisdom on PPP in context to Delhi

He highlighted that lack of data sharing by private health care providers which shares nearly 70% of the patient load has resulted in skewed evaluations of health care services in the state. He was affirmative on the need for a dedicated Program Manager for PPP activities, who can regularly coordinate with IAP/NNF and FOGSI members to update on recent Government of India RMNCH guidelines. PPP manager will be crucial for increasing private-public interface for sharing successes as well as resolving grievances.

Nearly 40 members of professional associations which have a strong membership of 2088 (FOGSI) and 1150 (IAP) in the state participated in the first workshop. Two Vriddhi supported state PPP consultants- Dr. Bedi and Dr. Sharma (Punjab and Himachal Pradesh) attended the workshop to understand the format and initiate the same in their states. The master trainers from NNF and FOGSI were Dr. Gambhir and Dr. Achla Batra, respectively. The variable protocols or lack of these in management of maternal and child health services in private facilities emerged and were acknowledged by the participants.



Dr. Achala Batra (FOGSI) facilitating the group work and addressing concerns, Delhi

Following group work, instantaneously, five participants expressed interest in receiving updates on RMNCH+A guidelines, Standard Operating Procedures and receiving support for service quality improvement. All private providers agreed to share or exchange RMNCH+A data; a secure and confidential data portal was requested.

In the concluding session moderated by Dr. Maknikar (JSI), Dr. Kapoor appreciated efforts of Vriddhi project in organizing PPP trainings. He assured all necessary support and inclusion of PPP relevant activities in State Project Implementation Plan. Dr. Maknikar mentioned that project team has submitted PPP concept note for the State Government approval.