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MAHE and ICMR Jointly Inaugurate the Aerial Healthcare Delivery System Utilizing Drones for Sample Transportation

PTI

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Manipal

Manipal, Karnataka, India (NewsVair)

Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) have joined forces to inaugurate the Deployment of a Robust Need based aerial healthcare delivery system (DRONE). The program aims to utilize drones for transporting Oncopathological Samples between Peripheral and Tertiary Care Hospitals in Karnataka.

The primary objective of this initiative is to assess the feasibility of transferring materials, such as frozen section samples, from remote locations to peripheral hospitals using aerial means. This endeavor is expected to enhance the healthcare system by enabling surgeons to perform procedures requiring such investigations in rural areas.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), commonly known as drones, have been gaining popularity across various industries, including healthcare. In India, the lack of intraoperative sample transportation from rural areas presents a significant challenge. The DRONE project seeks to explore the feasibility, utility, and cost-effectiveness of utilizing drones for this purpose. By leveraging drone technology, samples can be transported swiftly, providing immediate access to advanced diagnostics like Frozen section during surgical procedures. If successful, this research could revolutionize healthcare delivery by establishing connections between remote hospitals and laboratory facilities, thereby facilitating complex surgeries for patients in geographically inaccessible regions.

The inauguration ceremony was graced by esteemed dignitaries including Dr. Rajiv Bahl, Secretary, Dept. of Health Research, Govt. of India and Director General, ICMR, and Dr. Atul Goel, Director General of Health Services, DGHS, MoHFW, who served as chief guests. Dr. Sanghmitra Pati, Additional Director General (ADG), ICMR and Director, ICMR-RMRC, Bhubaneswar, Ms. Anu Nagar, Joint Secretary, Dept. of Health Research, Govt. of India, Dr. Kamini Walia, Scientist G & Head, Division of DDR, ICMR-Hq, New Delhi, Lt. Gen (Dr.) M D Venkatesh, Vice Chancellor, Dr. Sharath K Rao, Pro Vice Chancellor (Health Sciences) MAHE, Manipal, were among the distinguished guests.

Dr. Rajiv Bahl, in inaugurating the project, lauded the initiative's innovative approach to healthcare delivery, highlighting its potential to revolutionize sample transportation and diagnostic services, particularly in underserved rural areas.

During the event, Dr. Kamini Walia highlighted the significance of the project, emphasizing its potential impact on healthcare accessibility.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Anu Nagar emphasized the transformative potential of the DRONE project, stating that it represents a significant step towards bridging healthcare gaps and ensuring equitable access to medical services across Karnataka.

Dr. Sanghmitra Pati underscored the importance of collaborative research efforts in addressing healthcare challenges, expressing optimism about the project's ability to enhance diagnostic capabilities and improve patient outcomes.

Dr. Atul Goel emphasized the importance of the project in addressing healthcare disparities and enhancing medical services in rural areas.

Lt. Gen (Dr.) Venkatesh congratulated the ICMR for spearheading this pioneering initiative, emphasizing the importance of leveraging technology to address healthcare disparities and improve healthcare access for all communities.

In his presidential address, Dr. H.S. Ballal appreciated ICMR's collaborative spirit behind this drone project and emphasized the importance of innovation in healthcare. MAHE Manipal has always been at the forefront in such innovation.

The event commenced with a welcome note by Dr. Sunil Aggarwal, Scientist and Program Officer, ICMR. Dr. Kirthinath

Ballala, Chief Medical Officer at Dr. TMA Pai Rotary Hospital, Karkala, extended his heartfelt gratitude to all attendees and contributors for their unwavering support and dedication to the DRONE project.

Dr. Narayan Sabhahith, Pro chancellor (Technology and Science), Dr. Giridhar Kini, Registrar of MAHE Manipal, Dr. Padmaraj Hegde, Dean-KMC, Dr. Anand Venugopal, COO-Teaching Hospital, MAHE, Manipal, Dr. Arun Mayya Dean, Manipal College of Health Profession, Dr. Avinash Shetty, Medical Superintendent, Kasturba Hospital, Manipal, Dr. Kuldeep Nigam from ICMR also attended the event.

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