Press Release

Measles-Rubella initiative: IMA urges support in favor of the campaign

About 139 million children in India under the age of 9 months to 10 years are susceptible to Measles and Rubella infection. The medical community needs to support the campaign and accelerate its progress.

New Delhi, Jan 03, 2017: India, along with other WHO-SEAR countries, in September 2013, resolved to eliminate measles and control rubella/congenital rubella syndrome by 2020. Accordingly, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has introduced Rubella vaccine in its Universal Immunization Programmed as Measles-Rubella vaccine.

The MR (Measles-Rubella) vaccination campaign is scheduled from February 7 to February 24 and will cover the city schools in its first week. Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Goa, Puducherry and Lakshadweep are places where the vaccine will be introduced.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr. KK Aggarwal, President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and National President, IMA and Dr RN Tandon, Honorary Secretary General of Indian Medical Association (IMA), in a joint statement said that, “MR vaccine is a single injection and administered by trained professionals. The vaccinations will be free of cost and will target children in the age group of 9 months to 15 years. It is a single injection combined and administered in two doses - one, for children between 9 to 12 months and the second for children between 16 months and 24 months. Unlike the polio drops every child between the age of 9 months and 15 years needs to reach the booths for the vaccination.”

The campaign aims to rapidly build up immunity against measles and rubella, and also provides a second opportunity for vaccination against measles for children left out in routine immunization. As per 2015 data, measles-rubella vaccination coverage has been more than 90% at the national level and about 80% at the district level. The reported incidence rates have reduced up to less than 5 cases per million.

“Vaccine availability and management are big challenges to the campaign. Moreover quality training, micro planning & monitoring remain imperative. There is a need to sensitise patients and their relatives through mass level awareness campaigns. Doctors are urged to contribute by making
their clinic a part of vaccination center duly coordinated by the state health and family welfare department along with other bodies.”, added Dr. Aggarwal.

Vigilant monitoring of adverse effects is also a crucial component of the campaign to improvise existing schemes and strategies. Patient and doctor contribution is of utmost importance in this regard. Caretakers and patients can use IMA PvPI number – 9717776514 – to report adverse events.


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About IMA: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 29 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 53,000 doctors as its members through more than 1650 active local branches spread across the country.

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