Every preventable newborn death must be audited: IMA

IMA organises a workshop on Newborn Care in association with the Trained Nurses Association of India (TNAI) and Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI).

New Delhi, Jan 04, 2017: The newborn care workshop organised in by IMA today in association with the Trained Nurses Association of India (TNAI) and Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) highlighted some critical issues in the context of neonatal and infant healthcare. India ranks the topmost among countries with the highest number of child deaths in the world. In 2015, 1.2 million of the world’s total 5.9 million child deaths, (48% per 1000) live births occurred in India.

The majority of these deaths are due to preventable causes. Recognising this issue, IMA has ordered that every newborn death in India must be audited at each level of medical care to prevent further deaths. This is a part of the organisation’s undertaking to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr K.K Aggarwal, President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and National President Indian Medical Association (IMA), stated that “20% of world’s newborn mortality occurs in India. A majority of these are due to preventable causes and can be avoided. Auditing of such mortality cases will ensure that the cases are duly documented. This will help prevent further child deaths in future. This step will also ensure stringency in child care at hospitals across the nation as medical institutions will now have to be accountable to concerned authorities. Along with such stringent measures from the medical community, generating mass level awareness across socio-economic groups across India is also important.”

The top most preventable causes of newborn across the world are the following:

- Preterm complications
- Newborn infections
- Birth complications
- Mother’s malnutrition

Dr R N Tandon, Honorary Secretary General, Indian Medical Association added, “All newborn should be breastfed in the 1st ½ hour to reduce chances of infection.”
Ms Anita Deodhar, President, TNAI, in her message, said that nurses and doctors can complement each other in reducing neonatal mortality.

Ms P. Kannan, Secretary General, TNAI, stated that "Over 3 lakh children 0-6 years die because of preventable diarrhoea and, all these lives can be saved by giving timely ORS."

Dr Tanvi Pal, Sr. Paediatric Skin Specialist at BL Kapoor Super Speciality Hospital said, “It is a myth that one should remove the white layer on the skin of the newborn and that the mother should clean the cord of the newborn on a daily basis. While massaging the newborn baby is good for the health, avoid vigorous massage in the 1st month.”

The workshop also stressed that mass sensitization needs to be encouraged on aspects like immediate and exclusive breastfeeding, hospital birth and postnatal care especially in rural areas; access to adequate nutrition, knowledge of symptoms of danger signs in a child’s health; sanitation, hygiene and vaccinations.

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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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