‘Koi sun to nahi raha?’: IMA’s new National President launches campaign on medical confidentiality

Padma Shri and Dr B C Roy National Awardee Dr KK Aggarwal was sworn in as the 88th President of Indian Medical Association on Wednesday

New Delhi, Dec 31, 2016: Privacy and confidentiality are important tenets of ethical medical practice.

Patients have a legal right to data privacy, and there are laws in place to guide healthcare professionals about how to store, collect and distribute information. In this case, the patient is the supreme consent giver, and without such consent, no action on their health record can be taken.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr K.K Aggarwal, President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and National President Indian Medical Association (IMA), stated that "IMA wants to streamline the rules relating to medical privacy and confidentiality. Through the ‘koi sun to nahi raha’ campaign, we wish to draw the general public’s attention to the rights that they are entitled to. Data protection and confidentiality are important cornerstones of medical ethics and essential to good practice. Moreover, it is also crucial with respect to patient safety. Patients often share private and intimate details about themselves with their doctors who in turn have an obligation to keep this information safe and private”.

Patient-doctor confidentiality helps build trust between the two entities and fosters a trusting environment, which is crucial to encourage the patient to seek care and to be as honest as possible during the course of a treatment. ‘Koi sun to nahi raha?’ is a campaign focused on building and strengthening this trusting relationship.

“Apart from existing patient data protection laws and practices, we intend to bring out the discussion in everyday practice. Small but important routine practices in healthcare settings often breach this privacy unknowingly. For instance, IMA is against the operation theatre list being displayed in corridors; this discloses personal and sensitive information about the patients. For the same purpose, a coding based system can be devised so that the full identity of the patient is not disclosed. Moreover, calling out the name of the patient in the corridors outside ICU also falls under
this breach. These are small but often overlooked details in daily medical practice, which directly go against the medical ethic of doctor-patient confidentiality. IMA intends to highlight these issues and raise awareness among the patient and doctor community”, added Dr Aggarwal.

As a part of IMA’s mandate for the coming term, several innovative initiatives are underway. Mandatory request for organ donation is being implemented under the ‘Poochna mat bhoolo’ initiative. To help document and control preventable mortality, every such preventable death will be duly audited. The concept of ALERT- Acknowledge, Listen, explain, Revise and Thanks is being advocated as a routine practice in a clinical setting. The campaign for ‘think before you ink’ is being envisioned in the context of encouraging blood donations. Finally, ‘Jiska koi nahi uska IMA’ resonates the ideology that IMA holds above all- the greatest good is in helping those in need.

With this vision, IMA plans to make affordable, quality and specialised healthcare available to all under the leadership of Dr KK Aggarwal as it’s National President and Dr RN Tandon as the Honorary Secretary General in the coming year.

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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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