

FIND signs MoU with THSTI & Social Alpha

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The 5-year collaboration with Social Alpha will focus on initiation and scale up of innovative business models



In order to address the diagnostic needs that are critical to enabling universal health coverage (UHC) in India and beyond, the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) announced that memoranda of understanding (MoUs) have been signed with Social Alpha and the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI).

The 5-year collaboration with Social Alpha will focus on initiation and scale up of innovative business models and financing mechanisms, including exploration of funding opportunities and mentoring of potential innovators in the development and delivery of market-appropriate diagnostic technologies.

THSTI will work with FIND, also over a period of 5 years, to develop point-of-care tests for tuberculosis and hepatitis C, and tools that can identify causes of fever (including malaria) to reduce antibiotic overuse, alongside development of key training programmes.

Both agreements were signed during an event held at the 50th Union World Conference on Lung Health in Hyderabad, India, titled In India for the World – accelerating diagnostic R&D and innovation to achieve universal health coverage.

Dr K S Sachdeva, Deputy Director General, Central TB Division, MoHFW; Prof Gagandeep Kang, Executive Director, THSTI; Prof N K Ganguly, Visiting Professor of Eminence, THSTI; Dr Jayeeta Chowdhury, Programme Director at India Health Fund, Social Alpha; Dr Ramanan Laxminarayan, Chair, GARDP Board of Directors; Renuka Gadde, Vice President Global Health, Becton Dickinson; Dr Harish Iyer, India Country Lead, R&D and Senior Scientific Advisor, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Cat Oyler, Vice President Global Public Health, Tuberculosis, Johnson & Johnson; Dr Catharina Boehme, Chief Executive Officer, FIND; Dr Rangarajan Sampath, Chief Scientific Officer, FIND; and Dr Sanjay Sarin, Head of FIND India, among others were part of this event.

Speaking at the occasion, Dr Sanjay Sarin, Head of FIND India, said, "We are pleased to partner with Social Alpha and THSTI to spur new diagnostic innovation, which is critical for achieving UHC. With these new partnerships, we aim to leverage the R&D ecosystem in India to accelerate the development and delivery of new diagnostics relevant to the Indian and global context, and strengthen local capacity for diagnostic development."

Manoj Kumar, Founder and CEO, Social Alpha, said, "There is an urgent need to develop innovative technologies to serve the community, and through this collaboration, Social Alpha will work with FIND to develop innovative financing models to drive diagnostic development and delivery in India."

Dr Gagandeep Kang said, "We are excited to partner with FIND and leverage the expertise of the two organizations to drive development of much needed point-of-care diagnostic technologies in areas of mutual interest, and work towards establishing a training programme on diagnostics innovation, development, evaluation and access."

The MoUs are significant in light of the ambitious "Ayushman Bharat" initiative.