

## Batches of '12, '13, '14 & '15 graduate from Distance Education



The Annual Convocation of the Department of Distance Education was held on 29th April, 2017, at the Ida Scudder Auditorium. There were 266 graduates from various Distance Education courses, of whom 230 were from the Family Medicine discipline (M.MED in Family Medicine affiliated to the Tamil Nadu Dr. MGR Medical University; 22 from Post Graduate Diploma in Family Medicine [PGDFM]), and of these, 17 candidates belonged to the National Rural Health Mission, Government of India) and 14 doctors from the Distance Fellowship in Diabetes management (DFID) jointly run with the Department of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism.

Dr. Damodar Bachani, Deputy Commissioner, Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, presided over the ceremony. In his address to the graduates, Dr. Bachani presented some glimpses of the healthcare scenario in India. He emphasised the need for well-trained, compassionate health professionals who can deliver comprehensive, cost-effective care. He motivated the graduates to work with the government, wherever possible, to help its programmes reach the public. Finally, he encouraged the graduates to be lifelong learners.

Guest of Honour Dr. Bimal Charles, Director, Christian Medical Association of India, emphasised the importance of biblical values in the practice of medicine in the graduates' respective areas of service. Associate Director, Dr. Nihal Thomas, urged the graduates to think about the vital aspect of the healthcare education taught at CMC Vellore, which is to blend compassion with team work.



Dr. Vinod Shah, CEO, International Christian Medical and Dental Association (ICMDA), who was the special guest for the evening, read the pledge to the graduates. One candidate from each course gave feedback on how the course has impacted clinical practice for the betterment of the health of the community he/she serves.

The overall vision of the Distance Education Department is to train and capacity-build Human Resources for Health (HRH) at all levels of healthcare, with a goal to strengthen health care delivery systems in India and other developing countries. In doing so, the department seeks to bring sustained health transformation, with a special objective to facilitate health care access to the poor and marginalised, in the spirit of Christ.

All courses are run as blended learning programmes with a goal to build the capacity of General Practitioners (Private and Government Doctors) with minimal displacement from their workplaces, to enable them to manage more patients at the primary level reducing referrals, and to pass on the benefits to the patients from weaker sections of the society.

Thirteen mission hospitals across the country functioning as contact centres under the supervision of national and international faculty, form the pillars of these programmes, resulting in transformation in three aspects: Professional Excellence, Ethics and Values, and Culture of Patient Care. A morning session titled 'Recapturing the Vision' encapsulated this for the candidates. This session was led by Dr. Vinod Shah, founder of the Department of Distance Education, CMC Vellore, and Dr. Philip Finny, Local Co-ordinator of Duncan Hospital, Raxaul, Bihar contact centre.