

Training of trainers programme conducted for staff of NSACP Sri Lanka

The Departments of Clinical Virology and Clinical Microbiology jointly conducted a five-day 'Training of Trainers' programme on Laboratory Document Management, Internal Quality Control and External Quality Assessment for the staff of the National STD/AIDS Control Program (NSACP) of Sri Lanka. NSACP Sri Lanka is responsible for the co-ordination, planning and implementation of STD, HIV, and AIDS programs in the country.

The programme, conducted from the 18th to the 22nd of September, 2017, was supported by the U. S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), India, with Christian Medical Association of India (CMAI) as the implementing partner.

During the inaugural function held on the morning of 18th, Associate Director Dr. Dolly Daniel lighted the lamp, along with other dignitaries. Dr. Anu George from CMAI briefed the group on the objectives of the workshop. Dr. Asha Mary Abraham, Professor of Clinical Virology; Dr. Rajesh K., Head of Clinical Virology and Dr. V. Balaji, Head of Clinical Microbiology also spoke on the occasion.

The presentations and hands-on training by the faculty from the departments of Virology, Microbiology and Parasitology focused on various topics including laboratory documentation, IQCs preparation and validation for different tests like serology, molecular assays, staining and smears. Calibration and maintenance of important equipment were also demonstrated, along with a detailed discussion on the External Quality Assessment (EQA) programme.

Eleven participants including six Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLTs), two Public Health Laboratory Technologists (PHLTs) and three consultants from Microbiology and Venereology represented NSACP Sri Lanka. They visited the Antiretroviral Therapy (HIV) (ART) Centre and the departments of Dermatology and Venereology. They also had a session on laboratory information management systems and made a visit to the Department of Transfusion Medicine and Immunohematology to observe how data management was being done.

During the closing session on the 22nd of September, Dr. Jayanthi. P Elwitigala, Consultant Microbiologist at the National Reference Laboratory (NRL), Colombo,

made a presentation about the Sri Lankan experience. She expressed her gratitude for the help and support offered by CMC, CDC/PEPFAR and CMAI in strengthening the labs for accreditation in Sri Lanka. The feedback from all the participants was highly encouraging.

