

Virology conducts national conference to celebrate Golden Jubilee

To commemorate its Golden Jubilee, the Department of Virology conducted a national virology conference titled 'Clinical Virology- a distinct entity at the frontiers of health care' on the 21st and 22nd of July. The conference was held under the aegis of the Indian Association of Medical Microbiologists (IAMM).

The year-long celebrations which began on the 12th of October, 2016, included numerous scientific sessions, that also recalled the development of the department and its national contributions to polio eradication efforts, hepatovirology and HIV.

Other topics that were focused on were Virology Laboratory, Arbovirus, Transplant and Opportunistic Infections, Neurovirology, Respiratory Viral Infections and Vaccine Preventable Diseases.

The inaugural function, which was held on the evening of the 21st, began with a prayer by Rev. Pearson, after which the Head of the Department and Organising Chairperson Dr Rajesh Kannagi addressed the chief guests. The welcome address was given by Dr Mahesh Moorthy, Organizing Secretary, followed by the felicitation by Director Dr Sunil Chandy.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr Soumya Swaminathan, Secretary, Department of Health Research, and Director General of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). She pointed out the importance of virology and the relevance of virologists in the fields of public health and research, as most emerging diseases are viral infections.



Dr Swaminathan mentioned the several steps that have been taken to tackle the emergence of new vectors, new ways of transmission, and also described the expansion of the network of laboratories for the surveillance of fever cases across India. She also urged the conference organisers to submit a consensus list on virology research priorities to the ICMR, towards a focused course of action for the future.

The lectures were followed by oral and poster presentations by students. Dr Jayaprakash Muliyl, former Principal, CMC Vellore and Dr Gangandeeep Kang, Director, Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI), Faridabad, Delhi, gave away the prizes for the best presentations.

The conference ended on a lighter note with the batches of 2014 and '15 putting up a short entertainment program.

