

Dear Friends

I feel privileged in addressing the august gathering at the National Health Conclave 2017: Roadmap to address Chronic Care Conditions in India. It is a pleasure to be a part of this very unique initiative, involving leading medical and non-medical stakeholders from all over the country.

Friends, healthcare has emerged as one of the most challenging sectors as well as one of the largest service sector industries in India. Our Government is working aggressively to achieve the goal of Universal Health Coverage for all its citizens. The National Health Policy 2017 presents a clear vision of how India's health system can be galvanized to deliver health and well-being to all by 2030, to meet the Sustainable Development Goal on health. While espousing a strong public health approach and commitment to strengthening the public sector, the policy aims to draw upon the diverse systems of medicine and the different sectors of health-care providers that characterise our mixed health system, for providing much-needed health services across India.

However friends, India is experiencing a rapid health transition with a rising burden of NCDs. In 21st century, where India is making marked economic progress, it is confronting an ever increasing burden of NCDs while still continuing to fight against communicable diseases. Overall, NCDs are emerging as the leading cause of deaths in India accounting for over 42% of all deaths. Most non communicable conditions are chronic and these chronic conditions cause significant morbidity and mortality both in urban and rural population groups, with a huge loss in potentially productive years (aged 35-64 years) of life. According to the World Economic Forum, India stands to lose \$ 4.58 trillion (Rs 311.94 trillion between 2012 and 2030 due to non-communicable diseases.

Combating NCDs is one of the most significant challenge for the public health community globally. Although, India's healthcare sector has made impressive strides in recent years, it needs to gear up to tackle the chronic disease epidemic efficiently and effectively. It is evident that there is lack of focus on life style, diet, physical activity, and other methods of prevention and therefore need for greater emphasis on education, promotion and contemporary management of NCDs. While entry of corporate sector has greatly improved the access to tertiary care in urban India, greater focus on primary care remains the cornerstone in the promotion and prevention and management of chronic conditions. We need to comprehend the various steps and develop road map to address the NCDs through network of PHCs in government sector and on how this can be supplemented by private sector.

Friends I am glad that the National Health Conclave is expected to develop road map to address the issues related to Chronic Care Conditions as outlined above. The Conclave, as the name symbolises, will be a constructive step towards a multi-sectoral collaborative approach to strengthen healthcare systems in India by bringing all stake holders including government, research institutions, academia, industry, community and international agencies on one platform to find constructive and lasting solution.

Spearheaded by organizations like AHPI, PHFI, NBE, ANBAI and a host of leading Government and Non-Government organizations, it will be a platform for premier institutions and organizations to discuss and deliberate on the various issues that affect the nation's health scenario. I am being informed that apart from having a robust agenda covering all facets of chronic healthcare, the **highlights of the Conclave** will be the **launch of the ISRO dashboard on health quality, followed by the launch of PHFI's course on quality in healthcare and the announcement of the National Think Tank for Public Health.**

I am sure that the conclave will be different from regular conferences and the deliberations are expected to result in the formulation of strategies and recommendations that will help in policy development and implementation. **We at the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and the Government of India will look carefully at the proposed 'White Paper' that will be drafted from the proceedings of the conclave,** that I am sure is expected to aide in synergizing efforts and will add value to the initiatives that my ministry is already taking in combating the NCD epidemic.

I once again wish the Conclave and its organizers all the very best for its success and hope that it will be an ideal platform for health and non-health sectors to share and learn from experiences, and imbibe best practices for health systems strengthening apart from synergizing efforts of the public and private sectors in combating the NCD epidemic.

Jai Hind and Namaskar.