

PRESS RELEASE

FOGSI to intensify efforts to reduce Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) nationwide

~ Launches several initiatives, including GDM training, to strengthen healthcare delivery ~

CHENNAI, May 18, 2013

In an effort to reduce maternal mortality ratio (MMR) across the country, particularly in rural areas, the **Federation of Obstetric & Gynaecological Societies of India (FOGSI)**, the apex body of obstetricians and gynaecologists in the country, has launched multiple long-term initiatives aimed at achieving the UN Millennium Development Goal of reducing MMR to 100 for every 100,000 live births by 2015 in the country.

The FOGSI has joined hands with the **Diabetes in Pregnancy Study Group India (DIPSI)** and the **World Diabetes Foundation (WDF)** to take forward these initiatives. Commenting on the initiatives, **Dr. HemaDivakar, President, FOGSI**, said, *"We have undertaken several proactive long term initiatives like Saving Mothers, Helping Mothers Survive and Save the Girl Child, all aimed at reducing the MMR not only in India, but also South Asia. We are intensifying these programs by taking them to interior parts of the country. To further address the causes of MMR, we are training the obstetricians and gynaecologists and all other stakeholders of maternal health on various topics."*

Tamil Nadu has been at the forefront of improving maternal health care services. *"It has already achieved the UN Millennium Development Goal by reducing the MMR to 97/100,000 just behind Kerala where the MMR is 94/100,000, by way of fast forwarding health initiatives. Tamil Nadu was among the first states that recognised the Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM as a tsunami in the country,"* Dr. Hema added.

"The pregnancy related diabetes, GDM is steadily increasing in India from 2 per cent in 1982 to 7.2 per cent in 1991 and it had doubled to 16.55 per cent in 2002, which is a dangerous phenomenon. Unless, we tackle this problem on a war-footing, we will be adding more number of people to the diabetic population, which is not a good health indicator for a developing country like ours," pointed out **Dr. V. Seshiah, Chairman-DIPSI**.

Tamil Nadu's contribution in identifying GDM at an early stage has been tremendous. The first Independent Department of Diabetology was established at the Madras Medical College in the 80s. *"Women with GDM are at increased risk of future diabetes as are their children and following subsequent generations. Physicians need to devote special attention to this segment of population in developing countries,"* Dr. Seshiah noted.

As a first step in this direction, FOGSI, DIPSI and WDF are preparing 100 master trainers (gynaecologists and endocrinologists) to train 1000 ObGyns through the speciality course on GDM. These 1000 beneficiaries in 25 centres of the country would enhance their knowledge, skills and core competencies to address early detection, case management, counselling, referral and prevention of

GDM. This will help them establish Diabetes In Pregnancy (DIP) Clinics, for a focussed and specialised care of such women, before and beyond the pregnancy.

The first such training of trainers (ToT) was launched in Chennai on May 18, 2013, by Prof. D. Shantaram, Vice-Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Dr. MGR Medical University.

Under the guidance from Dr. Hema Divakar, President, FOGSI, and also the course director of the two-day training program, the first ToT will focus on Obstetricians and Gynaecologists from Pune, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Indore, Nagpur, Aurangabad, Delhi, Lucknow, Chandigarh, Jaipur, Bhubhaneshwar, Patna, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hubli-Dharwad, Coimbatore, Chennai, Kochi, Hyderabad and Vijayawada.

Commenting on the importance of the ToT on GDM, **Dr. Anil Kapur, Member, Board of Directors, World Diabetes Foundation**, said, *“Diabetes is often diagnosed in women during their childbearing years and can affect the health of both the mother and her unborn child. Poor control of diabetes during pregnancy increases the chances for birth defects and other problems for the baby. It can cause serious complications for the woman, also. Proper health care before and during pregnancy can help prevent birth defects and other poor outcomes. The GDM ToT program is not available in any medical colleges as of now.”* The GDM speciality course has been endorsed by FOGSI ICOG DIPSI and WDF.

“Given the high risk of GDM amongst Indians, all women must be screened for pre-existing but previously unknown diabetes as soon as possible in the pregnancy and again during the 24th to 28th week to rule out GDM. Because women with GDM continue to be at high risk of future diabetes they require repeated follow up. Even if one develops GDM, it can be treated and most complications avoided. Moreover, the risk of future diabetes in the mother and offspring can be greatly reduced with a healthy lifestyle post pregnancy and this includes a balanced diet, adequate exercise and ensuring that weight gained during pregnancy is lost,” Dr Anil Kapur added.

About FOGSI

The Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Societies of India (FOGSI) is the professional organization representing practitioners of obstetrics and gynaecology in India. With 219 member societies and over 27000 individual members spread over the length and breadth of the country, FOGSI is probably one of the largest membership based organizations of specialized professionals. FOGSI came into formal existence in Madras on January 6, 1950 at the sixth All India Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, when the obstetric and gynaecological societies of Ahmedabad, Bengal, Bombay, Madras and Punjab resolved to form themselves into the Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Societies of India.

www.fogsi.org

About DIPSI

The Diabetes In Pregnancy Study group India (DIPSI) is reporting practice guidelines for Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) in the Indian environment. The phenomenal increase in GDM prompted the formation of DIPSI in 2004, as doctors in the fields of diabetes and pregnancy joined hands to organize and research into clinical and academic aspects to reduce GDM.

www.dipsi.in

About World Diabetes Foundation

The World Diabetes Foundation was founded in 2002 with the vision of being a catalyst for change. Its objective is to open a window of hope in developing countries by supporting prevention and treatment of diabetes.

www.worlddiabetesfoundation.org