



Indian Confederation of Medical Laboratory Science

(National Registered Voice of Indian Medical Laboratory Professionals' Associations)

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Press Release

(National Medical Laboratory Professionals' Week 17th July to 23rd July, 2017)

LAB WALK at India Gate, New Delhi on 23rd July, 2017

On the call of **Indian Confederation of Medical Laboratory Sciences (ICMLS)**, an umbrella organization of more than 25 medical lab science associations, **National Medical Laboratory Professionals' Week** has been celebrated throughout the Country from 17th July to 23rd July, 2017. On the last day, a **LAB WALK** has been organised at India Gate, New Delhi on today 23rd July, 2017 to aware the general public about the role of medical lab professionals in present health care system. As a part of it Blood Sugar and BP monitoring was done for public.

During the week, many Scientific, social and cultural programmes like Scientific CME, Symposium, Blood donation camp, Eye donation awareness camp, Organ donation awareness camp and screening camp have been organised by the medical laboratory professionals of government and private health establishments across the country. The Importance of medical lab Profession and professionals have been highlighted by holding various programmes.

ICMLS is a national representative confederation of more than 50 thousand medical laboratory technologists and scientists working under various government and private health care establishments. ICMLS is also an affiliate of International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Sciences (IFBLS).

The Medical Laboratory Sciences and its professionals, who are often works behind the scene, have made significant strides and contribution during the last few decades to the amazing development of medical sciences. Considering the importance of it, several small and big countries have set up a systematic structure for medical laboratory profession & professionals. It is, however, regrettable, that in India, no such thing exists even after 70 years of Independence. There is no mechanism to regulate the professional education and practices of medical lab profession and neither the state governments nor the Centre have shown seriousness to tackle this situation. In absence of any regulatory legal mechanism to oversee the educational and professional standards, educational institutions have been mushrooming unabatedly across the country, only to earn profit that lack even basic requirement for such education. Not only that, Medical Technology staff, whether in the government sector or in private sector face a plethora of problems since there is no law to address their problems. For example, despite their qualification they do not have licenses to work on their own, they do not have recognized positions in the hierarchy for identical works, there are no proper rules for, recruitment, service conditions, salaries and allowances etc.

ICMLS has said that the Central government has been insensitive and indifferent to the plight of the medical laboratory professionals; with the result the first attempt to form Central Para Medical Councils Bill-2007 failed to see the light of the day. Then, the government came out with the proposal to set up a common body, NCHRH, incorporating the Central Paramedical Councils Bill -2007. After three years of discussions and debates the NCHRH was consigned to dustbin when the parliamentary standing committee turned it down. At this juncture the decades old demands raised by allied health professionals are still crying to be met.

Then, the Health Ministry came out with the proposal to set up National Board for Allied Health Sciences which did not get the cabinet approval even after three years, as some health bodies lobbied against it putting forward certain demands. Despite the experiences of multiple failures, the Health Ministry did not find it necessary to consider issue reasonably. Again in 2015, the Central Government has come out with a poor and an unrealistic draft thereby repeating its past mistakes.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Ministry of Health & FW, Govt. of India had sought comments from the stakeholders on the proposed bill till 25th October 2015. However, the ICMLS welcomed the decision of the government to set up a Central Council for Allied Health professionals, but showed their disappointment as it could not be processed further till date. ICMLS criticized the fickle attitude of the health ministry on such an important national issue.

ICMLS expressed the view that since there is no registration system in place, in absence of a central council it is not possible to know the actual number of allied health professionals, Not only that, it is not possible in present system to have the correct picture of numbers, needs and shortfall of the professionals.

In the past too, ICMLS carried on various programmes, to emphasize the need to create a mechanism for medical lab professionals. It is a matter of regret that the government assurances on these issues remain still unfulfilled. Furthermore, recently on the pretext of Clinical Establishment Act -2010 and without any comprehensive view point, Ministry has notified Clinical Establishment (Central Government) Amendment Rules -2017 for clinical laboratories which are neither feasible on practical ground nor tenable on legal ground.

However, the primary aim of **National Medical Laboratory Professionals' Week** was to share all professional developments, celebrate professional achievements and to plan for future goals and objectives for the betterment of medical lab profession and professionals. Nevertheless, ICMLS has also highlighted the all above mentioned professional challenges and issues during the week to invite the attention of Central and State Governments.

In this context, LAB WALK is being organised as a symbolic programme on concluding day i.e 23rd July, 2017 at India Gate to aware the general public about the role of medical laboratory services and its professionals in modern health care delivery system.

The Medical Laboratory Professionals from all major government health care institutions like AIIMS, New Delhi, PGI, Chandigarh, ESIC Hospitals throughout the country, Railway Hospitals and dispensaries, CGHS dispensaries, OFB Hospital, Central Hospitals and institutions, and private laboratories have actively participated and organised multiple programmes/activities.

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