



World Health  
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India

## PRESS RELEASE

### World Health Day focuses on Universal Health Coverage

**Jaipur, 15 April 2018:** A regional consultation, organised by the World Health Organization Country Office for India, Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP) and SMS Medical College, to mark the World Health Day 2018 made a strong call for ensuring Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

Mr Bohra Ramcharan, Member of Parliament was the chief guest on the occasion. The key issues discussed at the event included the various facets of UHC and way forward. In addition to students and faculty members, also in attendance were representatives from the government, IAP, members of the press and other key stakeholders. The Guest of Honour also gave away prizes to winners of slogan writing, poster and quiz competitions held on 7 April 2018, the World Health Day.

On the occasion of the World Health Day 2018, Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia Region has said that the promise of UHC is bold: that all people can access quality health services, when and where they need them, without suffering financial hardship.

“Healthier populations in turn create more productive economies that raise living standards. UHC will help achieve a healthier, more equitable and secure South-East Asia Region,” she added.

“Achieving UHC has the potential to contribute to India’s social and economic growth,” says Dr Henk Bekedam, WHO Representative to India.

Commending the government for its recent bold initiatives, Dr Bekedam said, “India is firmly and steadily moving forward on the path to UHC and WHO as a partner is committed to working with the government and other stakeholders in successfully navigating this journey towards a *Swastha and Samridha Bharat* (Healthy and Prosperous India).”



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### India on the path to UHC

The union budget has enunciated the landmark 'Ayushman Bharat' programme, which aims at addressing health holistically through two components: (i) the National Health Protection Mission (NHPM) will cover 100 million poor and vulnerable families up to INR 500 000 per year for secondary and tertiary care, and (ii) strengthening primary health care through 150 000 Health & Wellness Centres.

These twin initiatives are programmatic follow-up of the policy road-map provided by India's National Health Policy 2017, which clearly articulates UHC as a goal. The successful implementation of these programmes would accelerate India's journey towards ensuring health for all, especially, the most vulnerable who are pushed into poverty due to high out-of-pocket health expenditures.

### About World Health Day 2018

The WHO has declared Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as the theme for this year's World Health Day. Celebrated every year on 7<sup>th</sup> April, in 2018, the WHO is calling on world leaders to live up to the pledges they made when they agreed the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, and commit to concrete steps to advance the health of all people. This means ensuring that everyone, everywhere can access essential quality health services without facing financial hardship.

Join the UHC conversation on Twitter by using [#HealthForAll](#) and [#WorldHealthDay](#)

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**For useful information on World Health Day 2018, visit:**

[http://www.searo.who.int/india/mediacentre/events/world\\_health\\_day/World\\_Health\\_Day\\_2018\\_WCO/en/](http://www.searo.who.int/india/mediacentre/events/world_health_day/World_Health_Day_2018_WCO/en/)