

Press Release

FSSAI commemorates ‘National Conclave on Nutrition Security - Convergence and Partnerships’

Creating an ecosystem of services to patients with Inborn Errors of Metabolism

New Delhi, 16.10.2017: On the occasion of *National Conclave on Nutrition Security - Convergence and Partnerships*, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India introduced its new initiative ‘*Indian Food Recovery Alliance (IFRA)*’ – A coalition of food recovery partners in country to fight issue of hunger and also prevent food loss and food waste in India.

During the National Conclave, FSSAI also convened stakeholders about Diet4Life - An Initiative to create an ecosystem for providing comprehensive services to patients with Inborn Errors of Metabolism. This initiative provides a platform to import special diets for IEM since these diets are not available in India.

Diet4Life initiative is a collaborating effort of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and other stakeholders comprising AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences), IDA (Indian Dietetic Association), ISIEM (Indian Society for Inborn Errors of Metabolism), MERD (Metabolic Errors and Rare Diseases organization of India), IAP (Indian Academy of Paediatrics) NNP (National Neonatology Forum), ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) ISPGHAN (Indian Society of Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition) and Infant and Young Child Nutrition Council of India (IYNCCI) to ensure a holistic service for IEM patients, with the facilities of diagnosis, treatment and management of IEM.

IEM is a life-threatening condition, in which the patient is unable to metabolize certain nutrients and thus suffers from cognitive and physical disabilities for life. Such children have special dietary needs which if unmet, result in irreversible cognitive disorders and physical disabilities. In fact, without special diets, children born with IEM would often not survive infancy. IEM is estimated to affect over 30,000 children in India but in the absence of adequate screening facilities for this disorder, 30,000 diagnosed cases most likely represent only the tip of the iceberg.

As it progresses, the patients have now started getting the products. Under this initiative, a series of awareness as well as training programs have also been planned by the joint efforts of the mentioned stakeholders. A few of the awareness programs and trainings have already been conducted.

Way forward, the stakeholders are now working the backward integration to sustain and assist the holistic care and support to IEM patients by strengthening and upgrading existing IEM laboratories.

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