



P&G Health Brings Together Leading Health Experts to Tackle Global Iron Deficiency Anemia Issue

- Southeast Asia and Africa continue to report the highest prevalence rates of anemia, accounting for 85 % of global reported cases
- With >2,500 participants from 7 countries across Asia including >1000 from India from India, the 'P&G Blood Health Forum' saw the exchange of scientific research and clinical insights on the effective approaches and tools in fighting anemia
- P&G Health also announced a strategic partnership with the 'Asia & Oceania Federation of Obstetrics & Gynecology' (AOFOG) for professional and public health initiatives

INDIA, 2nd November 2020 – P&G Health, the health care division of The Procter & Gamble Company, today hosted the kick-off of the '**P&G Blood Health Forum**', a virtual series of medical education sharing sessions involving internationally recognized experts aimed at addressing the public health challenge that anemia continues to pose around the world.

Today, approximately 2.3 billion people suffer from anemia, with an estimated one in two attributed to iron deficiency anemia (IDA) and experiencing symptoms like frequent tiredness, dizziness, paleness, impaired immunity, thus impacting their quality of life and productivity. Southeast Asia and Africa continue to report the highest prevalence rates of anemia, accounting for 85 percent of global reported cases.

Held virtually across seven countries in Asia, this year's opening session was themed '*Pioneering blood health through early diagnosis and management of iron and micronutrient deficiency*'. The discussion sessions, led by an international speaker faculty of leading experts in the fields of anemia, public health, iron physiology and nutritional health, covered a wide breadth of topics on the diagnosis, communication and management of iron deficiency and anemia in patients.

India is one of the countries carrying the largest burden of anemia globally, contributing to an estimated 80% of the maternal deaths with almost 53% of pregnant women being anemic according to National Family Health Survey-4 (NFHS-4)

Importantly these topics were contextualized against the current global SARs-COV-2 pandemic. Drawing upon relevant, recent research exploring the potential role of red blood cell dynamics and iron homeostasis in the clinical presentation of COVID-19, the forum offered insights into physiological and clinical considerations for patient management in the new normal.

Renowned speakers included:

- Prof. Dr. Zulfiqar A. Bhutta, Robert Harding Inaugural Chair in Global Child Health, Hospital for Sick Children and Co-Director of the SickKids Centre for Global Child Health (Canada)
- Dr. Michael Low, Consultant Haematologist, Monash Medical Centre (Australia)
- Prof. Dr. Michael B. Zimmermann, Professor of Human Nutrition at the Department of Health Sciences and Technology, ETH Zürich (Switzerland)

Aalok Agrawal, Senior Vice President, P&G Health - Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa, said, "Anemia continues to be a public health issue around the world today, with some of the highest prevalence rates in Southeast Asia and Africa. Furthermore, it is a health risk that disproportionately affects some of our most vulnerable segments of society – women and children. With the P&G Blood Health Forum, we are heartened to be welcoming some of the world's leading experts in the field of anemia, iron physiology and nutritional health, to exchange insights and work together to tackle the global anemia health problem. By providing a platform for the fruitful exchange of scientific research

and clinical insights, we hope to nurture better awareness of the most effective approaches and tools in fighting anemia.”

Prof. Dr. Zulfiqar A. Bhutta, Robert Harding Inaugural Chair in Global Child Health, Hospital for Sick Children and Co-Director of the SickKids Centre for Global Child Health (Canada) stated, “Despite sufficient evidence as to the burden and epidemiology of anemia and iron deficiency among children and women of reproductive age in various parts of the world, progress in terms of mitigation strategies remains slow and is associated with significant loss in human capital. These challenges have been made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic and its myriad economic consequences. Addressing these systematically through improved diagnostic measures and appropriate interventions should become a global priority.”

“The full potential of several of the linked sustainable development goals for nutrition, health and learning (SDGs 2, 3 and 4) cannot be realized without addressing iron deficiency anemia at scale, especially among the marginalized and ultra-poor populations of the world”, **Dr. Bhutta added.**

As part of this initiative, **P&G Health also announced a strategic partnership with the ‘Asia & Oceania Federation of Obstetrics & Gynecology’ (AFOG)** whom it will be collaborating with on future professional and public health initiatives. This includes a series of ‘Blood Health Forum’ virtual sessions covering topics designed to educate, raise awareness and ultimately support better patient outcomes.

The forum was attended by more than 2,500 participants across Asia’s healthcare sector including >1000 from India. These included therapeutic specialists such as obstetricians and gynaecologists, paediatricians, general physicians and haematologists.

Dr. Rishma Pai, President of The Mumbai Obstetrics & Gynecology Society highlighted the fact that “Iron deficiency anemia is a very common nutritional condition affecting women and children across the world. In India, studies have concluded that up to 53% of pregnant women suffer from iron deficiency putting them at huge risk of severe health problems during pregnancy & delivery. This is a big challenge and therefore there is a need for education and awareness. P&G’s Blood Health Forum hosted on MediSage platform is a step forward towards positive change that will help open horizons through latest scientific updates, skill building and tools from across the globe to help heighten awareness among healthcare professionals around treating anemia effectively, and help break the cycle of iron deficiency and its associated problems.”

The 2020 P&G Blood Health Forum marks the second edition of P&G Health’s International Convention on Iron Deficiency and Anemia, as part of P&G Health’s continued aim to empower consumers to live longer, healthier and more vibrant lives.

About Procter & Gamble Health Limited:

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About P&G Health:

P&G Health, the health care division of P&G company, is competing in the largest, fastest growing \$200bn Personal Health Care and Oral Care categories, and markets to drive consumer-centric innovation that empower our consumers to live longer, healthier and more vibrant lives. The P&G Health portfolio includes leading brands in Respiratory with Vicks® and Nasivin®, Pregnancy with Femibion® and Clearblue®, Oral Care with Crest® and Oral-B®, Vitamins and Minerals Supplementation with Bion3®, Seven Seas®, Evion®, Sangobion®, Livogen™, Digestive wellness with Metamucil®, Prilosec®, Pepto Bismol® and Align®, Nerve Care with Neurobion® and Pain Relief with Dolo-Neurobion®.

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CONTACT:

For Media Queries:

AGENCY – 20:20 MSL

Ruchita Kothari | ruchita.kothari@2020msl.com

Jeunelle Rebello | jeunelle.rebello@2020msl.com | 8806749170

For Information on upcoming virtual sessions:

Jass Liew | liew.j.2@pg.com