

Minutes of the webinar meeting of AHRER

Date: 23.04.2020

Venue: Google Meet

Time: 07.00 PM-08.00 PM

Presiding members

Name	Specialty	Location
Prof. R. N. Sharan	Biochemistry	Shillong
Dr. Vikram Sharma	Urology	Delhi
Dr. Vikas Jain	Pediatrics	Indore
Dr. Chakrapani Chatla	Public Health	Hyderabad
Mr. Samrat Choudhery	AVI-Consumer Advocacy	Mumbai
Mr. Dhaval Gogate	Informatics Specialist,	Pune
Dr. Sree T. Sucharitha	Public Health	Chennai

The meeting of Association for Harm reduction Education & Research (AHRER) was convened on 23.04.2020 at **-7.00 PM-08.00 PM on web portal of Google Meet**. The members discussed the following issues:

- 1. Round of introductions:** Prof. Sharan initiated, and members introduced briefly about their professional backgrounds.
- 2. Introduction of AHRER:** Dr. Sre shared with the members, the latest updates including the newly registered professional body of AHRER in March, 2020. The association aims to build up the momentum towards harm reduction as practice in life across non-communicable diseases, obesity, tobacco, alcohol. The committee members were appraised on the Logo, and the process of setting a functional website.
- 3. Founding Members:** Dr. Sre thanked all the founding members for registration of AHRER and the unconditional support provided including documents for registration.
 1. Dr. Vikram Sharma- Urologist, Delhi
 2. Dr. Aparajit Kar-Pulmonologist, Delhi
 3. Dr. Vikas Jain-Pediatrician, Indore
 4. Dr. Vikas Punamiya- Pulmonologist, Mumbai
 5. Dr. Chakrapani Chatla- Public Health, Hyderabad
 6. Dr. Sree T. Sucharitha-Public Health, Chennai
- 4. Updates on the law regarding ENDS ban:** Mr. Samrat was requested for a historical review leading to ENDS ban in the country and issues involved in ban-advisory against ENDS related research was discussed.

5. **Membership Expansion:** The scope of expanding the membership to include multi-disciplinary professionals and suggestions were requested from participating members.
6. **Scope of AHRER:** The identity of the Association is linked to engaging in the forums and mediums to proactively contribute to the expansion of the knowledge and science of HARM REDUCTION in tobacco, alcohol, obesity, substance abuse, non-communicable disease. Significant role of the members in AHRER was agreed as that of a PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL (Dr.Sre) who can contribute to public writing in the form of editorial or articles in peer-reviewed journals, bulletins, professional body communications, newspapers in regional languages about application of 'harm reduction science' in broader areas including infectious Diseases (Prof. Sharan), non-communicable diseases etc.
7. **AHRER and Tobacco:** Tobacco remains central focus for AHRER and smokeless tobacco (SLT) and harm reduction measures such as decrease of intake (Prof. Sharan) role of SNUS and emergence of lower-risk alternatives market in India (Mr. Samrat) and focusing on disproportionately affected marginalized groups such as migrant construction workers (Dr. Sre) were collectively shared.
8. **Establishment of Expert Panel:** The proposal to constitute and induct eminent global (Prof. Marewa, Dr. Konstantinos Farsalinos, Dr. Alex Wodak, Prof. David Swenor) and national scientists (Prof. Sharan, Prof and Dr. Nimesh Desai, Dr. Atul Ambekar, Dr. Bharat Gopal) with incredible body of work in harm reduction was consented in the group.
9. **Focus of AHRER for next quarter:** The credibility and visibility of the Association (Dr. Vikram Sharma) can be promoted by inviting sound-bites from science celebrities/experts (Dr. Desai can be requested for an interview and he can introduce about AHRER and discuss synergies between harm reduction experiences in narcotics landscape in India and the emergence of tobacco harm reduction) to talk to AHRER, and to public about the need for AHRER and bodies promoting harm reduction in public domains and defining the key-areas of work as way forward such as writing editorials/letter to the editors on Harm Reduction (Dr. Vikas Jain), scoping research work on 3T's:Tobacco-Tuberculosis-Tobacco Harm Reduction (Dr. Chakrapani-CC and Dr. Sre) were discussed in depth.
10. **Monthly webinar:** It was proposed to host a monthly webinar to continue the discussions and include more members and invite guest speakers such as Dr. Desai were considered.
11. **Recap and closure:** After a quick recap, highlighting the importance of EDUCATION and RESEARCH as core identity of AHRER (Dr. Sre), all members agreed to meet a periodically to advance the vision and mission of AHRER.

*The minutes were drafted by Dr. Sree T. Sucharitha, AHRER

Suggestions and contribution to specific items discussed during the call

Item	Suggestions	Contributions
Membership Expansion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop membership documents/process 2. Free membership would be ideal for 3-6 months at least 	Samrat to guide or provide insights
Education of members	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof. Sharan can share one scientific reading article for members before we meet again for reading and anyone can volunteer to share for 5-10 minutes the summary of the paper in the next call 	Mention if you can take up this
Public Intellectual	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which Journals/Newspapers/Bulletins 2. We can collaborate and write together 3. AHRER piece can be developed on the basis of this minutes and published 	Mention if you can take up this
Establishment of Expert Panel	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We can draft request mail to identified experts in the minutes and ask them to be officially identified with AHRER as expert panel members 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Samrat to guide or provide insights 2. Mention if you can take up this
Visibility and Credibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mapping of experts with their body of work related to our discussion and make a resource directory 	Members can team up to work on this or one can volunteer to co-ordinate this with individual contribution from their own personal networks and work associates.
AHRER-Research Topics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HR and Tobacco (All forms excluding ENDS) 2. 3T's: Tobacco Tuberculosis and THR 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Propose research topics and collaboration for multi-site studies with

		<p>the members and their associates</p> <p>2. 3T's: Drs. CC and Sre are working on this and suggestions are invited</p> <p>3. Any funding opportunities and grant application resources are to be shared to get research funds.</p>
Guest Speaker/Celebrity Interview	<p>1. Prof. Sharan</p> <p>2. Dr. Desai</p> <p>Can be invited for guest speaking on next webinar/record a message on AHRER and can be circulated in social media.</p>	<p>Request Samrat/Dhaval to support this activity</p>

Next AHRER meeting proposed on : MAY 21st, 7-8 PM (please make us know how many can be available)