

## **MCGM, IPA teams up to sensitise pharmacy students on TB control**

Suja Nair Shirodkar

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Keen to bolster TB awareness initiative among students community in Mumbai, the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) and Indian Pharmaceutical Association (IPA) recently teamed up to sensitise pharmacy students about tuberculosis prevention. Under this programme it trained 120 pharmacy students from 15 colleges from across the city on different methods of TB control.

This initiative is a part of the DOTS TB pharmacist project, which is a collaborative effort between IPA and MCGM, aimed at strengthening its TB control initiative in Mumbai. The main objective behind this move is to expand its focus and train not only pharmacists, but also pharmacy students of various pharmacy colleges across Mumbai on the same.

IPA had undertaken this project with MCGM, the primary agency responsible for urban governance in greater Mumbai to develop the interest of the students, who will be the future pharmacists in the country, as TB advocates. “We have intensified our DOTS TB pharmacist project and this move stands as a testament to our commitment to address this growing issue. We got tremendous response from this programme, wherein students showed immense pro-activeness to be part of this project in the future as well. Taking a lead from this, we plan to replicate the same in other locations as well with the co-operation and support of the IPA students forum,” informed Manjiri Gharat, chairperson, IPA CPD.

Under this programme, IPA and MCGM experts trained and sensitised the students on TB epidemiology, cough etiquette and use of communication material to spread awareness on TB identification. The training of students has been another step to intensify the TB control activities in the city, as it seeks to empower students with practical aspects of TB prevention, transmission and treatment, experts added.

IPA and MCGM have been successfully training pharmacists to refer suspected TB cases to the nearest sputum microscopy centres as well act as DOTS providers that will enable making free anti-TB medicines available through pharmacies to the TB patients. Interestingly, IPA has trained over 750 plus pharmacists across the country using this model, which has also been successfully replicated by its partner NGOs to train others.

This is the first time they have expanded their reach over to the students’ community for the same. Experts point out that considering the diverse population residing in the city and the rise in the MDR cases it is important to have a proper sensitisation drive in the city.