

#Industry » #solid tumors #MedGenome #haematological diseases #Genomics #Dr Mammen Chandy #Dr JB Chatterjee Oration

'It is the era of genomics and haematology', says Dr Mammen Chandy at Haematocon 2015

The increasing role played by genetics in diseases particularly haematological diseases was highlighted at the 56th Annual meeting of the Indian Society of Haematology and Blood Transfusion (ISHBT) held in Bangalore.

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Bangalore : The increasing role played by genetics in diseases particularly haematological diseases was highlighted at the 56th Annual meeting of the Indian Society of Haematology and Blood Transfusion (ISHBT) held in Bangalore. The event was attended by 150-200 National faculty, 25-30 International faculty and about 1000 delegates from all over the country and surrounding

countries, in the fields of Haematology, Haemato-oncology, laboratory medicine and blood banking.

Dr Mammen Chandy, director, Tata Medical Centre, Kolkata, delivered the "Dr JB Chatterjee Oration - Are we in the era of genomic medicine?" He stressed on the point that we are in the era of genomic medicine and there is no other specialty that illustrates this better than haematology, which was supported by multiple case examples from the clinic.

Diving deeper into the CML examples, he specified how the diagnosis, ability to monitor and treat the CML with advanced techniques have transformed the life of the patients. He stated that the survival rates of patients suffering from CML has increased over the period of time and today CML is "converted into a chronic disease like diabetes, so pop a pill and carry on with life as if nothing ever happened". He expressed great satisfaction on how molecular biology has now translated into targeted therapies for the benefit of the patients. He remembered the contributions of Dr Yellapragada Subbarow to science and medicine who is credited with the first synthesis of folic acid among many other achievements.

"What has genomics done? It has allowed us to change from carpet bombing to sniper shooting. And that is the precision that genomics has given us" says Dr Mammen Chandy.

He warns though that this is not going to be so simple. Especially solid tumors where multiple targeted pathways exists. He suggests that we should be cautious when we translate these advances to routine clinical practice. No one size fits all and it has to be used as appropriate and where its application makes financial benefit to the practice and the patient.

He gave multiple examples where genomics has transformed the way we practice hematology today. He elaborated a case example of a patient presenting with AML but required Fanconi Anemia testing to decide on the conditioning required before stem cell transplantation. The eminent clinician specifically highlighted the genetic testing done at MedGenome. The firm sequenced all of the FANC genes and reported that this kid does not have Fanconi, which allowed the clinician to switch from minimal therapy for the AML to standard intensive therapy.

"We are happy to work with clinicians like Dr Mammen Chandy, who are always applying the latest scientific advancements to clinical practice" specifies Mr Sam Santhosh, CEO, MedGenome. "MedGenome has built advanced Next-Generation sequencing facilities in Bangalore and Cochin to meet this growing need in the country."

With the advent of new technologies such as Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) and improved analytics, algorithms and tools for genomic data analysis in the recent years, decoding an individual's genome went through a revolution by exponentially reducing sequencing cost while increasing processing speed. Genetic testing has so far gained considerable traction in clinical setting for prevention, diagnosis, treatment and management of diseases with an underlying genetic reason

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