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Doctor-patient relationship must be revived, say experts

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The relationship between doctors and patients is dying and needs to be rebuilt immediately, a panel of medical professionals said on Friday. The observation comes in the wake of incidents of violence against doctors this year —first in Davanagere and Mandya and recently in Malur.

At a panel discussion organized on the second day of BBMP's health festival, eminent city doctors from the public and private sectors said they want patients not only to respect them but also repose trust in them.

HEALTH FESTIVAL

Dr H Sudarshan Ballal, chairman, Manipal Hospitals, said: "Nowadays, patients are willing to kill doctors, set them on fire and vandalize hospitals. This should not happen in a civilized modern society. The relationship between doctor and patient should be re-established. What patients don't understand is that successful treatment depends on doctors spending quality time and not quantity time with them. Patients and their kin take offense if a doctor fails to give them undivided attention...Patients should trust the doctor and realize his limitations".

Explaining the limitations of doctors in India, Dr Vivek Jawali, chief cardiologist and vascular surgeon at Fortis Hospital, said: "Today, a patient goes to a doctor only when he trusts the professional. This trust makes patients more positive and helps them during treatment. However, what they don't realize is the immense pressure the medical fraternity in our country has to bear. In the US, Germany and other western countries, no one will find a doctor going beyond his individual capacity and treating more than 100 patients a day. But we have to do so as many are waiting in the queue."

Patients don't realize that doctors can do nothing about inadequate infrastucture, Dr T K Ramesh, medical superintendent, Minto Hospital, said. "During a procedure, if there is a sudden shortage of drips, doctors are not at fault. We feel terrible at not having enough equipment but are helpless," he added.

Emphasizing patients' need to be handheld, Dr Vivek said: "We are planning to add the post of hospitalist who will ensure a patient is comfortable right from his /her entry into hospital. A training programme for the purpose will help".

Dr Ballal added: "Apart from competence, a doctor needs to have good communication skills. Keeping that in mind, we have introduced a special course on soft skills for medicos, which is not a part of regular medical science curriculum".

Attitude needs change

The biggest challenge for the medical fraternity is to pay equal attention to each patient. Doctors give more time to patients with serious afflictions than those who are considerably better. This creates a misunderstanding among patients. This attitude needs to change

Dr T K Ramesh | MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT, MINTO HOSPITAL

THE TIMES OF INDIA

IISc researchers design new molecule for cancer cure

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: When the world is increasingly seeking a miracle cure for cancer, a team from Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru has designed and synthesized a new molecule called Disarib that can kill cancer cells which over produce a protein called BCL2.

BCL2 is one of a large family of proteins that regulate cell death and growth. Disarib, the researchers claim, works better than the presently available drugs and is a noteworthy addition to the list of designer molecules.

The targeted therapy given for cancer patients involves use of 'designer molecules' directed against a particular rogue molecule in the body that is responsible for cancer. In recent years, many such molecules have found phenomenal success as effective cancer drugs. The discovery of Disarib by Sathees Raghavan's team at the department of biochemistry, IISc, in collaboration with researchers from various other institutes, is a noteworthy addition to this list of molecules.

The team even successfully utilized a humanized model of tumour in mice for ovarian carcinoma, in addition to three independent mouse tumour models for investigating the tumour regression property of Disarib. The molecule was found effective against a range of cancers – leukaemia, lymphoma, breast cancer, ovarian cancer and colon cancer.

"Initially, there were a number of criticisms," said Raghavan. "So, we designed more experiments, brought in more experts and came up with more evidence to support our findings. However, some pharmaceutical companies have shown an interest in the newly found molecule. "Now we are working towards a bigger version of the study, bringing in more chemists and clinicians. It'll take some time before we can decide whether it will hit the markets. However, it looks very promising," Raghavan added.

Disarib is the culmination of 8 years of collaborative research involving 24 researchers from 8 different research groups across various labs.

The molecule was synthesized at Subhas Karki's laboratory in KLE University College of Pharmacy, Bengaluru. Supriya V Vartak and Divyaanka Iyer, graduate students with Raghavan, at the department of Biochemistry, IISc, have also contributed significantly to the study.

Though the initial findings of the study seem promising, there's still a long way to go before we see Disarib in the market. Many pre-clinical trials are yet to be done before the drug gets approved for clinical trials.