

Event Report
Launch of Project CORE

Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) in collaboration with Public Health Foundations of India (PHFI) proudly organized the launch of Project CORE (Community Focused Research for Oral Health Equity), an initiative aimed at advancing oral health research with a focus on community engagement and equitable health practices, by NIHR Global Health Group on Oral Health on 16th October 2024 at Juniper Hall, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. This project seeks to enhance oral health education, strengthen healthcare partnerships, and address social determinants impacting access to oral health care across India.

Speaking at the inaugural session, the Chief Guest Prof. Mohammad Shakeel, Officiating Vice Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia congratulated Prof Richard Watt, the lead investigator from University College, London, Prof Abhishek Mehta from Faculty of Dentistry, JMI and all the other Principal investigators from 10 prestigious institutions in 15 countries around the world. He emphasized the need for the sustainable development goal 3 to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all. Prof. Mohammad Shakeel talked about the rich cultural heritage of the Jamia, which holds inclusivity and equity in all spheres among its core values. Prof Keya Sircar, Dean, Faculty of Dentistry congratulated all the stakeholders and expressed her gratitude that Jamia would play a significant role in achieving the lofty goals of this prestigious multinational project. She emphasized the importance of recognizing that ‘There is no health without oral health’. In his special remarks, Dr Naveen Verma, explained the National Oral Health Program, establishment of National resource center and the role of the National Oral Health Policy, in reducing the burden of oral disease in India.

In his keynote address, Prof K Srinath Reddy, President PHFI spoke about the social, economic and environmental impact of poor oral health. In order to restore health, there is an urgent need to assess the reasons for inequitable access to oral health care and then find solutions for the same.

The event was graced by Prof. Mahesh Verma, Vice Chancellor, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Prof. O.P. Kharbanda, Vice-Chancellor, Ramaiah University, Bangalore, Prof Srinath Reddy, President, Public Health Foundation of India, Prof. Ritu Duggal, Chief, CDER, AIIMS, Delhi, Dr Naveen Verma, MOHFW, Dr. Ashok Dhoble, Honorary Secretary General, Indian Dental Association, Dr. Nitika Monga, ICMR and Principals and Deans of dental colleges across

India. All the dignitaries emphasized the growing recognition of the importance of good oral health and the need to ensure equitable access to oral health care if the goal of universal health coverage must be achieved by 2030.

The inaugural session concluded with a lamp-lighting ceremony, symbolizing the auspicious start of Project CORE, followed by the National Anthem.

The event was a huge success as it brought together leaders in the fields of public health, education, research and community underscoring the need for collaborations across institutions to foster equitable health outcomes.