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Collaboration is key to enhancing public health

29 January 2013 | Regulatory | By BioSpectrum Bureau

Singapore: The three-day Asia Regulatory Conference 2013 is under way at the Raffles City Convention Center, Singapore, with much pomp and grandeur. The event, which has been organized by Health Sciences Authority (HSA), Drug Information Association (DIA) and the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (IFPMA), will focus on ways to improving public healthcare.

One-of-the-main issues that has emerged during the day-one of the program is that collaboration is key to safeguarding and enhancing public health. The issues of collaboration is also being hailed as the need-of-the-hour as in the recent past, the Asian region has experienced very fast growth in global drug development activities encouraged by various initiatives and incentives from countries in the region. Many multi-national pharmaceutical corporations and global contract research organisations (CROs) are now operating in Asia, and drug development is undergoing constant growth and advancement. These factors fuel the need for organizations to collaborate.

Furthermore, the diversity of the region and the spectrum of different demographic and socio-economic settings allow for medicines to be developed for disease conditions in developed and developing countries.

Dr Amy Khor, Minister of State for Health and Manpower, Singapore, while speaking on the topic of collaboration at the opening ceremony, said that, "Countries like Japan, Korea and Singapore face the increasing challenge of appropriately managing the healthcare needs of a rapidly ageing population and the rising incidence of chronic diseases. It is therefore important to look at more public-private partnerships to ensure better utilisation of resources to meet national healthcare needs, as well as to create the right environment for ongoing life science innovation."

"Greater collaboration among industry players and regulators will not only ensure more effective and efficient drug development, provide early access to safe and high quality products to markets, but will also ensure more effective surveillance of medicines already in the market," Dr Khor said.