

Eli Lilly's corporate social responsibility impact

April 23, 2013 | Opinion | By BioSpectrum Bureau



For more than 135 years, Eli Lilly and Company has demonstrated a commitment to be a responsible global citizen, in large part, through a long history of philanthropic contributions. Our greatest contribution to society, however, is to continue to discover and develop innovative medicines, which will ultimately help us realize our vision to make a significant contribution to humanity by improving global health in the 21st century. We're drawing on our scientific, technical and business expertise to serve patients, meet the community's needs and reduce our environmental footprint.

At Lilly India, we are collaborating with government and other stakeholders to build trust and reinforce our mutual interest in bringing value to patients and society. Increasingly, we are integrating the concept of "shared value" into the way we operate. Using our business expertise to help address pressing social needs opens up new opportunities for us to provide solutions to health challenges.

We have initiated several corporate responsibility initiatives in India, which we believe this approach will help to create enduring value for society and for Lilly. These include, Global Day of Service and Global Health Programs, like Lilly MDR-TB Partnership and Uday- the Lilly NCD partnership, among others.

Global day of service

Each October, we partner with local non governmental organizations to contribute in a meaningful manner. All employees across India work with local organizations to make a difference in the lives of the people who are under privileged.

Global health programs

Health is among an individual's most important personal assets and medicines play an essential role in preserving it. However, around the world, millions lack access to comprehensive health care, including medicines and other treatment tools. Lilly is committed to expanding access to medicines, and we work with partners to improve health outcomes for underserved populations. Lilly's Global health programs include signature public-private programs, including The Lilly NCD Partnership and The Lilly MDR-TB Partnership.

The Lilly MDR-TB Partnership

Every year, nearly two million people die from tuberculosis (TB), a curable disease. Poor adherence to the necessary drug regimen and interrupted treatment are widespread problems in resource-constrained countries. With 1.9 million new TB cases each year, India has the highest incidence of TB in the world accounting for nearly one-fifth of the global incidence. If people do not complete their treatment, or if medication is incorrectly prescribed, a more serious form of TB, multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) can arise. Though the rate of MDR-TB is relatively low in India, when translated into absolute numbers it comes to an astounding 131,000 cases of MDR-TB. In India today, two people die from TB every three minutes, a staggering number indeed. More unfortunate is the fact that these deaths could easily be avoided.

In 2003, Lilly India launched a multi-pronged philanthropic program to fight MDR-TB involving private and public health care professionals, academia, international organizations and producers of medicines in developing regions around the world. The Lilly MDR-TB Partnership has been working in India (Delhi, Kolkata, Maharashtra, Chennai and Hyderabad) for the last several years with various stakeholders to combat this daunting disease. Under its aegis, it has collaborated with the Government of India's Revised National TB Control Program (RNTCP) to assist in implementation of the DOTS Plus Program in various states. It is also working with institutions like the Indian Medical Association, NGOs and industry associations. The company made investments to ensure that thousands of MDR-TB patients receive the care and medication they need to combat this disease.

Lilly India was honored with the "Award of Excellence in CSR" by the Delhi state government and the Aaj Tak CARE Awards for the exemplary work demonstrated as part of the Lilly MDR-TB initiative.

'Uday' - The Lilly NCD Partnership

India is home to over 61 million diabetic patients, an increase from 50.8 million last year. By 2030, India's diabetes burden is expected to cross the 100 million mark as against 87 million earlier estimated. India's diabetes burden is second to China, which has 90 million people with diabetes (2011) that will increase to about 130 million by 2030. Hence, non-communicable diseases are a major health challenge for India and Lilly realized that there is a pressing need to address its rising burden. Under the auspices of the Lilly NCD Partnership, Lilly India recently announced the launch of "Uday", an intensive five-year program aiming to fight the rising burden of non-communicable diseases in India, with an initial focus on improving outcomes for people with diabetes and high blood pressure. Based on this unique research, report and advocate framework, this program aims to demonstrate cost-effective scalable approaches for effective diabetes and high blood pressure management. Through this approach, the program will focus on sharing results with key stakeholders, including government and the global health community to encourage adoption of the best solutions. In the first phase, the project will be implemented in Vizag (Andhra Pradesh) and Sonapat (Haryana). The primary partners in India are the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), Population Services International (PSI) and Project Hope.