

"Smart healthcare can be enabled through collaboration of all stake holders"

22 November 2016 | Influencers | By Aishwarya Venkatesh

"Smart healthcare can be enabled through collaboration of all stake holders"



What have been the achievements of APACMed in the past one year?

APACMed has entered its second year and has been getting good response and reception from the industry and regional associations like Australia's MTTA of which we are one of the board members. India has also come up with its own version of medical technology industry association. So in terms of the bringing the industry together we are getting lot of tractions. This is the first time that other than the old associations, a new association is getting attention of government bodies, regulators and different stake holders. It has been a good year in terms of accomplishments that we have achieved in building a base in the industry.

What role is APACMed playing in bridging the medtech industry with regulatory bodies in Asia?

This industry is coming up with products and innovations that physicians do not get to see in medical college or during their

training. So this is the industry's task to train the physicians on such innovations. Similarly, the industry has a strong role to work with the regulators in making them understand that how a certain innovation or a device can bring change in the healthcare system. What we can do together is speeding up the approval process and establishing one voice on behalf of the industry to communicate with the regulators. This would be extremely constructive in dealing with regulators of different countries where one can approach as an industry rather than an individual company. You can impress upon the regulators and get an understanding from their side on different standards that need to be achieved to get approval for a device. This would also help the industry to meet those standards with transparency and better understanding. Approaching the regulators as an industry also helps in building trust with the authority and credibility and simplifying the whole process.

Is the association equally influential in communicating with countries that are still in the process of building a robust regulatory structure?

Countries in which APACMed has strong visibility and partnership will get the support to represent the industry to the respective regulatory. Regulators in the countries that are in the process of developing a sound regulatory structure also take feedback and suggestion from the association to understand the practises of other regions that could be vital in their process.

What role can clinical research organizations play in shaping up the future medtech industry?

Clinical trials are critical not only for efficacy but to evaluate a value based healthcare system. It helps not only in analysing the benefits of a device on patients but also the cost attached to it. There is an opportunity to put all aspects together to understand the benefits and the cost. This gives direction to industry to develop devices that are innovative as well as cost effective to reach large number of patients and make a difference in healthcare outcomes. Therefore, clinical trial data of medical technologies are very important in analysing all these aspects.

Is APACMed instrumental in supporting the start-ups that are working on breakthrough innovations?

APACMed is open to start-ups and the association is constantly making efforts to create platform that gives them opportunity to interact with big companies of the industry. It also gives space for collaboration for innovation and breakthrough devices. For instance, the APACMed Forum has been successful in bringing the start-ups and local companies to interact with the large MNCs, listen to regulators and understand new aspects of the business.

What is your view on smart healthcare and the role of association in enabling it?

Smart healthcare is going to play a critical role in enabling access to healthcare in developed cities as well as in regions that lacks clinics and hospitals. Smart healthcare is an ecosystem that can facilitate initial consultation with the doctors in places such as rural India, rural China, Vietnam, Cambodia and others. Smart healthcare can only be enabled through collaboration of all stake holders be it medical device companies, IT enablers, logistics providers and hospitals and clinicians.