

Interview with the organizing chair person of the Indian HIV Congress 2010, Dr. J.K. Maniar

Dr. Maniar, thank you so much for inviting the German AIDS Society to attend the Indian HIV Congress 2010 in Mumbai from 8th to 10th January. As the organizing chairperson could you please give a short review about the conference?

J.K. Maniar: Well, the conference is held since more than 10 years. First the meeting took place every year, but due to financial constraint we have recently made it every alternate years. The main objective is to invite health care workers including physicians and sensitise them periodically regarding changing concepts of management of HIV infection. This year we focused on recent advances in management of HIV infection, perinatal HIV infection and pediatric AIDS. More than 500 people attended the conference.

What is the dimension of HIV in India today? What are the biggest challenges?

J.K. Maniar: It is needless to mention that HIV epidemic is matured fully since 1986. The principal challenges are access to antiretroviral therapy inspite of adequate generic antiretrovirals are available at a much cheap prices marketed in India.

Are there important differences between a western country like Germany and India regarding the treatment of HIV?

J.K. Maniar: The national guidelines for HIV management have failed to meet the need of current recommendation and continue to wait till CD4 count touches 200 by which time most of patients have opportunistic infections.

There are public and private sectors to offer antiretroviral therapy. Unfortunately health insurance do not cover the cost of treatment for HIV infection. There are distinct differences in the quality of management of HIV patients at private sector.

I was really impressed by your choice of fixed dose combinations. What is the history of this development?

J.K. Maniar: The generic pharma marketed fixed dose combination before multinational pharma. There are various combinations including recently combination of atazanavir and ritonavir

The Indian HIV Congress is supported by many organizations. For the second time the German AIDS Society has been a partner. What's the impact of this partnership?

J.K. Maniar: Of course it carries lots of importance realizing German AIDS Society extending morale support besides academic support.

When will the next Indian HIV Congress take place?

J.K. Maniar: It shall be HIV Congress 2012 either in January or February 2012 and we are confident you shall join us in a big way and also patronize.

Dr. Maniar, thank you for the interview!

Das Interview führte Annette Haberl