

PROCEEDINGS OF MILITARY HEALTHCARE WEBINAR 2020

BY

BRIG RAJAT UPRETI, SENIOR FELLOW, CENJOWS

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Introduction

1. CENJOWS and IMR jointly conducted a Webinar on Military Healthcare in association with the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS). The webinar was conducted at New Delhi on 25 Jul 2020.

Welcome Address

2. Lt Gen Vinod Bhatia, PVSM, AVSM, SM (Retd), Director CENJOWS, welcomed all the dignitaries and participants to the webinar and thanked DGAFMS and IMR for the detailed planning and execution of the event. He highlighted the stellar role played by the medical personnel in both war and peace and the immense faith reposed on them by the uniformed fraternity. The importance of force protection both during war and peace was stressed upon and he also highlighted the relevance of the webinar especially in these times of COVID and events along the China border.

SESSION-1 : MILITARY HEALTHCARE PHILOSOPHY

3. This session was chaired by Lt Gen Vinod Bhatia, PVSM, AVSM, SM (Retd), Director CENJOWS. He wished all the participants the very best in discussing all the relevant issues which will ensure a future ready force. He was assisted by representatives from the Medical Services and the Industry as the co-panelists.

Keynote Address

4. Lt Gen Anup Bannerji, SM, PHS, DGAFMS & Senior Colonel Commandant of AMC gave the Keynote address wherein he welcomed all the delegates and expressed his gratitude to Director CENJOWS for the kind words spoken about the Armed Forces Medical Services. He gave an overview of the Military Healthcare philosophy and highlighted the role of the Medical services in ensuring the highest level of medical fitness of the soldiers in varied terrain and climatic conditions both during peace and war. He highlighted the unique nature of military healthcare which caters for womb to tomb requirements of not just the soldiers but also their families and ESM. He explained the components of the healthcare wheel and the importance of the triad of healthcare, i.e. ethics, people and processes as also the various levels of healthcare being provided. He concluded by highlighting the challenges of the future and the way ahead which will be necessitated by the changed future environment, the impact of technology and cost effectiveness.

Second Speaker

5. Maj Gen Anupam Chatteraj, Addl DGAFMS spoke on the very important and thought provoking topic of ethics in healthcare services. He highlighted the definition of ethics in general and specific to the medical services. Within the medical services the military personnel are also governed by the military oath and not just the Hippocratic Oath and this at times causes ethical dilemma when the primacy of the national security has to be seen within the medical prism. He explained the status of medical personnel in the Geneva Convention and the decision dilemma

faced by young professionals in the field with conflicting requirements of resources being at a premium, the need to ensure adequacy of numbers for the task at hand and prioritizing of medical care with the military aim in the national security paradigm.

Third Speaker

6. Col Neeraj Garg, SO to DGGAFMS gave an insight on the echelon based combat medical support. He highlighted the aim of combat medical support, the nature and challenges and need to create capacities and capabilities in the combatants to overcome the shortage of medical support at all places. He gave a detailed overview of the echelons of combat medical support including casualty evacuation.

Fourth Speaker

7. Mr Pranav Shitte, MD, G.Surgiwear Ltd, gave an overview of the company and spoke on the product portfolio, especially the indigenously designed and manufactured Tourniquet, which the company is providing to the medical services both within and outside the country. He highlighted the state of art products which are being developed with the aim of saving life of soldiers in field conditions.

Fifth Speaker

8. Dr Rajvi Mehta, Scientific Consultant, Trivector Biomed LLP spoke on challenges of air pollution and spread of diseases through the aerial route, especially in hospitals. She gave a detailed talk on various air cleaning technologies available in the environment and products available with the company for ensuring safe air at key establishments.

SESSION-2 : EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND PROTOCOL FOR HEALTHCARE IN COMBAT

9. This session was chaired by Air Marshal Pawan Kapoor, AVSM, VSM** (Retd). He gave an overview of the principles of combat healthcare and emphasized on the need to provide the correct intervention in the correct time and the need to train and retrain all personnel continuously. He was assisted by representatives from the Medical Services and Industry as the co-panelists.

First Speaker

10. Lt Gen Madhuri Kanitkar, DCIDS (Medical), HQ IDS spoke on the way forward in Telemedicine. She highlighted the need to use this tech to overcome the various shortages of resources faced by medical professionals. She further explained that as part of Digital India, the National Digital Healthcare Mission (NDHM), which is likely to be launched on 15 Aug 20, plans to spread telemedicine throughout India. She gave a detailed presentation on the plans for expanding telemedicine in conjunction with all stake holders so as to make it available across the country in a cost effective manner. The future medical care would require the use of IOT, Big data analysis, AI etc within a secure legal framework and the AFMS too would have to embrace it. The first step would be the launch of SeHAT & ECHSeHAT, the e-OPD planned for the services in the near future.

Second Speaker

11. Mr Leo Mavelly, founder and CEO of Axo Biosolutions, spoke on the novel indigenous technologies to control life threatening bleeding during combat. He highlighted that the largest number of casualties in combat occurs due to bleeding and of these 54% are potentially

survivable. He gave a detailed presentation on various products being manufactured by the company which are also being exported. He requested for greater interaction between the industry and the AFMS so that innovations within the country as per the needs of the user could be expedited.

SESSION-3 : MODERNISATION OF MILITARY HEALTHCARE INFRASTRUCTURE AND DELIVERY

12. This session was chaired by Surg Vice Adm MV Singh, AVSM, PHS. He was assisted by representatives from the medical services and the industry as the co-panelists.

Keynote Address

13. Air Marshal MS Butola, PHS, DGMS (Air) gave the keynote address wherein he highlighted importance of infrastructure development especially in the primary combat healthcare. He explained the importance of this especially in the current scenario on the Indo China border. He spoke on the need to use technology and infrastructure to reduce the days spent in acclimatization in HAA by having high press (O2) transportable tents. Use of such methods will enhance availability of acclimatized troops in a faster time frame, thus improving combat capabilities. He concluded by emphasizing on the importance of developing infrastructure and use of technologies for combat healthcare.

Second Speaker

14. Surg Vice Admiral Joy Chatterjee, VSM, DG Hospital Services spoke on the very important and relevant topic of setting up field hospitals for combat healthcare. He gave a detailed presentation on the concept, available infrastructure, the deployment timings, layout and the features available in such facilities. He explained that such facilities will be extremely essential in providing high quality healthcare to the troops in the field and we are well on the way in implementing these in our Armed Forces.

Third Speaker

15. Air Cmde Sadhna S Nair, VSM gave a detailed presentation on the use of technology in medical healthcare with special emphasis on wearable devices. She explained the various types of such devices, their capabilities and benefits. The challenges, especially secure networks and security of data were also explained and she concluded that this was the way forward in providing quality healthcare to people in remote and difficult locations insofar as the forces are concerned.

Fourth Speaker

16. Mr Dilip Patil, founder director Trivector Biomed LLC spoke on the topic of hand and surface hygiene in medical healthcare and this has assumed much greater importance since the spread of the COVID pandemic.

Fifth Speaker

17. Cmde Ajay Sharma (Retd), VP, Bharat Forge spoke on the topic of Making in India for the world and gave an overview of the innovation and indigenous products being manufactured by the company especially for monitoring and surveillance of personnel in offices and public places which has taken greater role in the post COVID scenario.

SESSION - 4 : CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

18. This session was chaired by Lt Gen (Dr) C S Narayanan (Retd). He was assisted by representatives from the medical services and Industry as the co-panelists.

First Speaker

19. Surg Vice Admiral Rajat Datta, AVSM, SM, VSM, DGMS (Navy) spoke on the challenges in military healthcare. Some of the important issues and challenges which were highlighted included the rising costs, requirement of energy efficient hospitals, cost effective treatment, robust procurement, harnessing and motivation of the workforce, and good leadership.

Second Speaker

20. Maj Gen S Bhatnagar, ADG AFMS (MR, H&Trg) gave a detailed presentation on the avenues in research, health and training. He explained the major research themes on which work is already ongoing. He also gave a detailed account of the response to COVID by the country and the armed forces.

21. The seminar provided an opportunity to all the stake holders to discuss the relevant issues pertaining to medical healthcare and a number of important issues emerged which will provide the way forward in further improving and rejuvenating combat healthcare. At the conclusion of the Webinar, Maj Gen Ravi Arora (Retd), Chief Editor IMR gave the vote of thanks and complimented all the participants on the comprehensive discussions on all aspects.