A two-day National Webinar on Pharmacovigilance of ASU & H Drugs was organized by Intermediary Pharmacovigilance Centre for Unani Drugs, National Institute of Unani Medicine, Bangalore on 15th and 16th September, 2020. The program was sponsored by Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India.

One of the important mandates of the Central Sector Scheme for Pharmacovigilance in ASU & H Drugs is creation of awareness and training of manpower in this field. As a mandate one national level program is organised each year. Last year it was conducted at IPGT & RA, Jamnagar i.e. in western India and there it was suggested that next year such a program will be hosted by NIUM, Bangalore. This will take the national event this time more towards southern India and help in creating increased awareness.

In response to the notification of National Webinar on Pharmacovigilance of ASU & H Drugs, a total of 1929 participants registered out of which around 1100 participants attended the program. In this webinar, Pharmacovigilance coordinator, Program associates, program assistants, medical officers, faculty, stakeholders, medical practitioners and students from all AYUSH streams have participated.

The session started with welcome address by Prof. Abdul Wadud, Director, NIUM, Bangalore.

The inaugural address was delivered by Dr. D. C. Katoch Adviser (Ay) & Head Drug Policy and Pharmacovigilance Program Officer, Ministry of AYUSH, New Delhi.

The inaugural session was Graced by Hon’ble Padmashri Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH, Govt of India. Honourable secretary appreciated the webinar on Pharmacovigilance of ASU & H drugs. He emphasised on the Svadhyaya (reminded our self), it provides us better productivity. He stressed on the quality improvement of the drug and also emphasised on reporting of ADR that will help the system to improve. Shri Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha pointed to increase awareness program to all the stakeholders. Further, he focused on the impact on Patient Rights mechanism. He also shared his views on proper labelling of the drugs, which can help in tracking the ADR. Finally he complimented the team of PVP across the country on the mechanism of ADR reporting system adopted by the PVP.

Opening remarks of the National Webinar was presented by Dr. Galib R. Coordinator, NPvCC, AIIA, New Delhi.

The inaugural program ended with vote of thanks by Dr. Mohd Aleemuddin Quamri Coordinator, IPvC, NIUM, Bangalore.

On the first day, the technical session was started with the deliberation of Dr. D. C. Katoch Adviser (Ay) & Head Drug Policy and Pharmacovigilance Program Officer, Ministry of AYUSH, New Delhi on “Need & Scope of Pharmacovigilance: Future Perspective regarding ASU&H drugs”.
Second speaker of the first day technical session was Dr. Jai Prakash, Secretary-cum-Scientific-Director (I/C), Indian Pharmacopeia Commission, Ghaziabad. He delivered his talk on Pharmacovigilance Programme of India - Experiences and lessons learnt and IT-Tools under PvPI. The next speaker was Prof. G. P. Mohanta, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar. The speaker delivered the lecture on Effective Communication in Pharmacovigilance. The next speaker was Dr. Jayashree Gupta, President, Consumers India. She has delivered a lecture on Surveillance of misleading advertisements regarding ASU&H drugs. The next speaker was Dr. S. P. Shani, Deputy Drug Controller, CDSCO, New Delhi who talked on Signal detection, Causality assessment of Suspected ADRs regarding ASU&H drugs. The final speaker of technical sessions on Day 1 was Dr. Arun Gupta, Head Medical Affairs, Dabur India Ltd. He talked on Industrial Perspective of Pharmacovigilance. Following the technical session there was a panel discussion by the guest speakers. The first day program ended with concluding remarks by Dr. Mohd Aleemuddin Quamri, Coordinator, IPvC, NIUM, Bangalore.

The second day (16th September, 2020) webinar started with preface message by the Organising Secretary Webinar on World Patient Safety Day and on its WHO theme – Health Worker Safety: A Priority for Patient Safety and the slogan is ‘Safe Health Workers, Safety Patients’ followed by the first speaker Dr Galib R. Coordinator, NPvCC, AIIA, New Delhi who spoke on Challenges in implementing Pharmacovigilance in Ayurveda. Dr. R. Meenakumari, Director, NIS, Chennai followed Dr. Galib R. as the second speaker on Day 2 and covered the topic of Concept of Pharmacovigilance in Siddha. The next session was taken over by Dr. Anil Khurana, DG, CCRH, New Delhi. Concept of Pharmacovigilance in Homeopathy was covered under his lecture. The next speaker was Prof. Abdul Wadud, Director, NIUM, Bangalore. The topic of his lecture was ‘Concept of Pharmacovigilance in Unani medicine.’ The 5th speaker for the day was Dr. Padma Gurmeet, Director, NRIS, Leh. He introduced the ‘Concept of Pharmacovigilance in Sowa-rigpa’.

Prof. Syed Ziaur Rahman, Department of Pharmacology, JNMC AMU Aligarh took over the session and spoke on ‘Concept of Materio-vigilance and its Importance in AYUSH.’ The last speaker of the program was Dr. Rachna Paliwal, Research Officer, Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India. She covered the topic of ‘Surveillance of Misleading advertisements of AYUSH drugs.’ The program was concluded with Vote of Thanks by Dr. Mohd. Aleemuddin Quamri, Co-ordinator, IPvC, NIUM, Bangalore.