

A revolution in treatment of tuberculosis: Dr Malhotra

HT Correspondent

A NEW and rapid diagnostic modality for Multi-Drug Resistant TB would revolutionise the treatment of Tuberculosis, SMS Medical College microbiology associate professor Dr Bharti Malhotra said.

She was speaking at a training session in the microbiology department of Sawai Man Singh (SMS) hospital, Jaipur under a collaborative project by the Central TB Division of Government of India and the Foundation of Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND), Geneva. Earlier SMS Medical College principal and controller Dr A Panagariya had inaugurated this three-day training programme.

Dr Malhotra said, "It will be first pilot project and if the results are positive then it will be used in revised

national TB control programme. We will test it on 1,000 patients in a year and it is being done at about six centres in the country."

Under the FIND project, the Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) would pilot the use of a new and rapid diagnosis method of diagnosing multi-drug resistant TB. The test is a product of Germany. The advantage of this test, are its equivalent or perhaps increased accuracy compared to standard methods and an increase in the number of interpretable results.

It only takes one-two days to obtain results of this test, as opposed to the main reporting time of 42 days with conventional cultures. This could mean considerable benefits to patients in terms of reduction of morbidity and benefits to the health sys-

tem in terms of early detection of patients and earlier initiation of treatment, thereby helping to reduce the transmission.

The project would pilot the use of this test in Indian settings and has been planned by the Central TB Division in multiple centres in the country such as at Sawai Man Singh Medical College Jaipur, TB Research Centre Chennai, General Hospital of Thracie, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad and at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi.

Dr Leela Vyas, head of the department of microbiology SMS Medical College, Dr Yamuna Mundade coordinator of FIND projects in India and Dr Punest Dewan medical officer Tuberculosis from World Health Organisation's office in New Delhi were also present on the occasion.