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## 'Create capacity for clinical trials in Ayush disciplines'

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### Modi appeals to pharmaceutical players to popularise ancient Indian medicine

Our Bureau

In an extension to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to pharmaceutical players to popularise ancient Indian medicine, the apex policy advocacy body, Niti Aayog, has suggested to create capacities in the areas of clinical research and clinical trials for professionals from Ayush disciplines.

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The modern medicine is supported by the scientific evidence from research and trials, whereas the alternative medicines and traditional medicines such as ayurveda have frequently come under the scanner of the medical practitioners for the lack of comparable extensive research in the area.

In order to address the challenge and push for the traditional Indian medicines, Vinod Paul, member (health), Niti Aayog, expressed the entity's readiness to create capacity in the area of clinical research and clinical trials for experts.

He stated that there are important scientific considerations such as clinical studies, epidemiological studies and biomedical studies have to be followed. “If you want to pass a particular product to be accepted by everybody and to become a mainstream product, come with a high-value publication in the best mainstream journals and then the methodological rigour that we apply to other drugs will be applied to the molecules of interest coming from other disciplines,” he said during a session on policy thrust for innovation at the Global Innovation Summit 2021 by the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA), inaugurated on Thursday, by the Prime Minister.

In his address, Prime Minister Modi asked the industry to find ways to popularise the traditional medicines in line with global requirements, scientific standards and best manufacturing practices. “There is now significant and growing demand of these products in the international market. This can be seen through the sharp rise in exports of these products in the recent years,” said Modi adding that in 2020-21 alone, India exported herbal medicines worth over \$1.5 billion.

Also what further fuels India’s aspirations on traditional medicines is the WHO’s decision to set up its Global Centre for Traditional Medicines in India.

“But there is an important challenge of the capacity to conduct high quality study designing, the randomised controlled trials, ample sample sizes and the measurements of outcomes. I plead here to seek your guidance and Niti would be keen to create capacity in the area of clinical research, clinical trials among the experts from the Ayush background,” said Paul.

Dr Paul also added that Niti Aayog can “work together on conducting studies. These studies should be fully-funded and should have standard sample size and the rigour of the highest level”.

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