

Design health services around people, not the disease

BOBBY RAMAKANT - CNS
A group of people standing at a podium AI-generated content may be incorrect.

"We need to design services around people, not the disease," rightly said Dr Nittaya Phanuphak. Unless point-of-care health technologies are deployed for those who are most-in-need in a person-centred and rights-based manner, we would fail to deliver on the promises enshrined in #HealthForAll and SDGs goals and targets.

"Point-of-care health technologies sitting in centralised laboratories are as good as centralised, lab-dependent ones - both remain inaccessible to those in acute need," said Shobha Shukla. "But when point-of-care tools are taken and deployed as close as possible to the communities to serve them with equity and human dignity, real change happens."

Shobha and Dr Nittaya were speaking at the 2nd Asia Pacific Conference on Point-of-Care Diagnostics for Infectious Diseases (POC 2025) and in lead up to the 13th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Science (IAS 2025). Dr Nittaya Phanuphak is the Convener of POC 2025; Executive Director of Institute of HIV Research and Innovation (IHRI) and Governing Council member of International AIDS Society (IAS). Shobha leads CNS (Citizen News Service) and Chairs Global Antimicrobial Resistance Media Alliance (GAMA).

Community-led models proved same day "test and treat" for HCV is feasible and effective

In India's Manipur, Community Network for Empowerment (CoNE) and partners did a path-breaking study to prove that same day "test and treat" is possible, feasible and effective for hepatitis C virus (HCV). They could do so because for the confirmatory test, the sample did not have to go for centralised laboratories but could be tested on WHO recommended point-of-care, decentralised, battery-operated (with solar power recharging capabilities) and laboratory independent multi-disease molecular testing platform, Truenat.

So, when confirmatory test Truenat could be deployed closer to the communities, it became possible to screen people, and offer molecular test on Truenat to those who needed a confirmatory test on-spot. Result came back within an hour after which treatment initiation could be followed upon.

Giten Khwairakpam, one of the study co-authors who works with amfAR's TREATAsia programme, was speaking at POC 2025. Truenat is made in India by Molbio Diagnostics, is the largest used molecular test for TB in India (and also deployed in over 85 countries globally), and over 9000 machines are deployed by the government (for TB) across India.

This study enrolled 643 people (during November 2021 to August 2022) out of which 503 were screened - all were males and had a history of injection drug use. Community people who formerly had a history of injection drug use conducted the screening.

155 people were found to have viraemia, out of which 98% (153) were initiated on treatment on the same day (remaining 2 people also were initiated on treatment soon after). All (100%) completed the treatment. All (100%) those who tested negative were offered vaccination for hepatitis B virus.

It is a powerful example from the communities which should



her team made a major difference in bridging the gap between TB services and people who were left behind on islets of Bantayan.

seas. Dr Samantha's untiring efforts have resulted in a tremendous increase in TB case finding: the number of persons screened

sis and Lung Disease (The Union) and currently leads Molbio Diagnostics as General Manager, chaired this session at POC 2025. She said that Truenat, which was validated independently by the Indian Council of Medical Research of the Government of India in 2017, offers PCR molecular testing for over 40 diseases (including current strains of COVID-19).

Being WHO recommended battery-operated, laboratory independent, decentralised and point-of-care molecular test for TB with solar power recharging capacities, it is increasingly getting deployed in peripheral areas of several high-burden countries now. Largest rollout of Truenat in Africa took place in Nigeria last December. Nigeria is home to largest number of people with TB in Africa.

We need to close the gap between people-in-need and point-of-care standard diagnostics by taking services closer to them or at their doorstep, said Dr Laloo.

Colossal cost of misdiagnosis on communities

Noted #endTB activist Blessina Kumar who leads Global Coalition of TB Advocates (GC-TA) shared a powerful real-life testimony of Meera, who survived one of the most serious forms of drug-resistant TB (Extensively Drug-Resistant TB or XDR-TB). If someone had XDR-TB in 2012, there were tools back then too, to test for TB and drug-resistant TB within 100 minutes. And after drug-susceptibility testing (to ensure that TB bacteria is sensitive to medicines used in the therapy), an effective treatment could have helped Meera towards cure.

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inform national and global policies for improving hepatitis responses on the ground - in person-centred manner.

Philippines' Bantayan offers another strong example when point-of-care tools are deployed at point-of-need

In multiple islets of Bantayan in the northernmost part of Cebu, Philippines, only around one-third of the estimated TB cases could be notified before the pandemic. But after the introduction of new TB screening and diagnostic tools, now almost all the TB (99%) is found in 2024.

Dr Samantha Tinsay, government Municipal Health Officer, Bantayan, Cebu, Philippines and

She took point-of-care and battery operated AI-CAD enabled X-Rays and Truenat (point-of-care, battery-operated, laboratory independent and de-centralised molecular test) - both kept safely in a moulded plastic box - loaded on a pump boat - and went from islet to islet - screening people for TB and offering confirmatory Truenat molecular test on the spot. Within an hour or so, those found with active TB disease were linked to TB treatment care pathway.

New TB case notifications, as well as treatment success rate, increased manifold. But the journey was not easy - also due to inclement weather and stormy

for presumptive TB went up from 187 (in 2019) to 2506 (in 2022), 2027 (in 2023), and 5679 people in 2024.

"TB treatment success rate has also increased to 97% in 2023," she confirmed. Average TB treatment success rate in the Philippines was 78% in 2023 as per the WHO Global TB Report 2024.

Imagine the difference it can make in the Philippines' response to end TB if such interventions can be scaled up and become a norm.

Dr Darivianca Elliotte Laloo, who has earlier served at the Stop TB Partnership and International Union Against Tuberculo-

Memories Turn to Colour This World Music Day, Iconic Songs Come Back to Life

This World Music Day, Ultra Media & Entertainment Group pays tribute to India's cinematic golden age by bringing iconic songs back to life - now in breathtaking colour and restored to their former glory.

Through its pioneering platform Ultra Gaane, India's first audio-video music streaming app, the group unveils a specially curated collection of digitally restored and colourized Classic Hindi film songs that defined generations.

These timeless melodies, originally filmed in black and white, have been meticulously enhanced using Ultra's proprietary technology - offering a whole new way to experience these masterpieces.

This exclusive collection features some of the most celebrated songs in Indian cinema history, including the soulful "Waqt Ne Kiya Kya Haseen Sitam" from Kaagaz Ke Phool, to the melancholy "Jaane Woh Kaise Log



The" from Pyaasa, and the playful charm of "Jaane Kahan Mera Jigar Gaya Ji" and "Thandi Hawa Kali Ghata" from Mr. & Mrs. 55.

Romantic gems like "Yeh Raat Bhigi Bhigi", "Aa Jaa Sanam Madhur Chandni Mein Hum", and "Jahan Main Jaati Hoon" from Chori Chori return in vibrant colour, offering a new way to experience their magic.

Also included are timeless favorites like "Na Jao Saiyan Chhuda Ke Baiyan" from Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam, "Chaudhvin Ka Chand Ho", "Ae Dil Mujhe Bata De", "Zara Dekh Sanam", "Do Nain Mile Do Phool Khile", "Kaha Hai Hum Yeh Mat Puccho", and "Chhupa Kar Meri Aankhon Ko" - now enhanced in both audio and visual clarity, reintroducing classics to a new era of listeners and viewers.

"These songs are timeless lessons in cinema and emotion," said Sushilkumar Agrawal, Chairman & Managing Director of Ultra Media & Entertainment

ment Group.

"By rejuvenating these classics in colour, we're not just preserving India's musical legacy - we're helping new generations of filmmakers and moviegoers experience the brilliance of the past in a form that speaks to the present.

It's about giving memory a new medium to live on." Echoing that sentiment, Rajat Agrawal, COO & Director of Ultra Media & Entertainment Group, emphasized, "Preservation is our mission, but storytelling is our soul.

With Ultra Gaane, we're not only archiving the past - we're making it sing again. These Colourized classics are our way of reminding the world that nostalgia can still surprise you."

The songs are now streaming exclusively on Ultra Gaane, making this World Music Day the perfect occasion to rediscover the soul of Indian music - now shining in colour.

Dr Vinay Mishra's corner...



Question - We are four sister and all are married. Somehow I don't see trust among us. I see other people having a lot of trust on their brothers/ sisters but it is not present in us. What should I do at this stage in life to build trust

KH Indore

Answer - Here's a realistic approach to building trust with your sisters at this stage in life.

1. Start with Self-Reflection- Ask yourself: Why do I feel there's a lack of trust? Is it based on specific incidents, long-term patterns, or just a vague feeling? What kind of trust do I wish existed?

2. Lead with Vulnerability- Trust often grows when someone takes the first step. This could be you.

Try sharing something personal like a feeling or a challenge you're facing, asking for help in a small, non-demanding way, being the first to listen without judgment or giving advice unless asked.

3. Create Regular, Low-Pressure Connection- Sometimes, distrust grows from distance or lack of meaningful interaction. Try to propose a monthly sisters-only call, a WhatsApp group, or a simple ritual like wishing each other on specific occasions and start with light-hearted topics.

4. Set Healthy Boundaries While Being Consistent- Sometimes lack of trust comes from poor boundaries like too much interference, gossip, judgment, etc. so stay consistent with your actions and show that you can be trusted.

5. Be Patient- Building trust can take time, especially if the foundation is shaky or if misunderstandings have piled up. If you feel discouraged, remember that even one improved relationship among the four is a step forward.

This Is How Dermats Want You To Exfoliate - Based On Your Skin Type

Exfoliation is truly the cornerstone of achieving that coveted healthy glow - but here's the catch: what works wonders for one skin type could wreak havoc on another. According to integrative dermatologist Dr Sonali Kohli, far too many people unknowingly sabotage their skin by over-exfoliating or using methods that don't align with their skin's unique needs. That's why she is breaking it down for you - so you can get that lit-from-within glow without compromising your skin's health.

Sensitive Skin When it comes to sensitive skin, gentleness is the golden rule. Once a week, opt for enzyme-based exfoliants featuring ingredients like papaya or pumpkin enzymes. These work by dissolving dead skin cells



without the harsh scrubbing action that can trigger inflammation and redness.

Oily & Acne-Prone Skin

For oily or acne-prone skin, salicylic acid is your best friend. This beta-hydroxy acid penetrates deep into pores to clear out excess oil and prevent breakouts. Begin with a low concentration - around 0.5% - used twice a week, and gradually build up as your skin adjusts. The key is patience - rushing the process often leads to over-drying and reactive oil production.

Dry Skin

If you have dry skin, think of exfoliation as both a refresh and a rehydrate. Alpha-hydroxy acids (AHAs) like lactic acid are ideal - they gently dissolve dead skin cells while drawing moisture into the skin. Gly-

colic acid is another effective option, but make sure to follow it up with a nourishing moisturiser containing ceramides or hyaluronic acid.

Mature Skin

Mature skin needs a more nuanced routine - one that combines gentle physical exfoliation and chemical exfoliants. I often suggest alternating between lactic acid and retinol on different nights (never together), to encourage healthy cell turnover while avoiding irritation or overstimulation.

In the end, consistency always trumps intensity. A gentle, well-matched routine practiced regularly will deliver far better results than harsh, aggressive treatments. Listen to your skin - it always knows what it needs.

