

Dr. Suma T K receives international award from American society of tropical medicine and hygiene for three decades of work in lymphatic filariasis

Dr. Suma T K , Professor of Medicine and Director of Filariasis research unit at Government medical college, Alappuzha is awarded the Distinguished International Fellow of American Society of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene (ASTMH) 2020 for her three decades of committed work in controlling and patient care in lymphatic filariasis . Dr Suma is the first Malayali to receive this prestigious award from ASTMH. This award is a special recognition of eminent contribution made her in achieving control of LF and optimizing care of patients in Alappuzha as well as in other endemic countries.

This award was presented by the President of ASTMH DR Joel Breman during the annual meeting of ASTMH held virtually on 15-19 November.

Words of Dr. Joel Breman- “Professor Suma Krishnasastry has been a mainstay of WHO’s special program of research and development in tropical disease with a focus on ways to optimize patient care and management. Her unit is now designated as WHO collaborating center for lymphatic filariasis morbidity management and disability program. As such her unit places a central role in creating policies and develops and implements training for health care workers of various countries in optimal care of patients with lymphedema and related pathologies. Congratulations Prof. Suma Krishnasastry”.

Professor Suma, is working in the dept of Medicine, Alappuzha Medical College since 1988 and started working in Filariasis research unit started by Government in 1989 under the leadership Prof. R.K. Shenoy. The relentless research and work was instrumental in developing several policies and WHO has now designated the unit as WHO collaborating centre for the filariasis patients related activities.

With the committed and dedicated work for three decades the centre had developed various simple techniques to alleviate suffering of patients with lymphedema. With the help of WHO trainings are being conducted for doctors and nurses of various countries in these techniques. Health care providers from Countries of South east Asia region (Bangladesh, Srilanka, Indonesia, Thailand etc), Eastern Mediterranean regions (Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, Yemen) had

come to Alappuzha to get trained in these techniques. In addition, countries in African region (Tanzania, The Gambia, Ghana, Ethiopia etc) and western pacific region (Philippines, French Polynesia etc) had also been trained.

In Kerala doctors and nurses from THQ hospitals and CHCs of all 14 districts have been trained as part of SDG. The trained health care providers have started filariasis clinics in their own hospital to provide care for the LF patients.

Picture- Dr Joel Breman, President ASTMH announcing the fellowship
Letter from ASTMH