

# Vision for a Healthy Future

**“HEALTH IS WEALTH!”** Never before has this saying rung so true, and so ominous, as during the COVID-19 pandemic. The over-burdened hospitals, deaths all around, the fear and pain of losing loved ones, the haunting lockdowns, and the misery it created throughout the world – all are testament to the fact that health is indeed wealth.

This year’s theme for the World Health Day, which is celebrated every year on 7<sup>th</sup> April, is “Health for All”, highlighting the importance of healthy living for everyone, irrespective of their socioeconomic status. The COVID-19 pandemic, which was not the first of its kind and will certainly not be the last, clearly demonstrated that countries with strong healthcare systems and robust public health infrastructure were better equipped to respond to the pandemic and protect their populations.

There is a need for governments round the world to ensure easy access to health services and resources to everyone – rising above barriers such as poverty, discrimination, and accessibility to information as well as health services. In fact, to achieve health for all, a comprehensive approach is required – one that also addresses the social, economic, environmental, sanitation and educational factors.

The pandemic also clearly brought home the message that health communication & awareness and prevention efforts can go a long way in ensuring that hospitals and health infrastructure are not put under too much stress. This would involve promoting healthy lifestyles and behaviours, such as exercise, healthy eating, and stress management, as well as providing access to preventative screenings and vaccines.

In the coming years, technological inputs may become imperative to usher in an ideal health vision. This would increasingly include digital health tools and platforms, such as telemedicine and remote monitoring to enable patients to receive care from anywhere and at any time. This will not only reduce costs and improve convenience but will also ensure health access to those who live in remote or underserved areas.

Another aspect of technology that needs to be mentioned is the vast amounts of health data being generated – by leveraging this data and through analytics, health trends and patterns can be identified that can help to improve care and prevent disease. The use of artificial intelligence and machine learning to analyze patient data could lead to personalized treatment plans.

On the occasion of the World Health Day, this month’s issue of *Science Reporter* has a special focus on healthy eating – including incorporating millets into the daily diet, apart from features on dental care, caring for your mental health, and looking forward to a health vision for the future.

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