

Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College Hosts First West Zone and Maharashtra State Conference on Adolescent Health – ADOLESCON 2025

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Department of Paediatrics at Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College, Hospital & Research Centre, Pimpri, Pune, in association with the Maharashtra Adolescent Health Academy (MAHA-AHA), successfully hosted the First West Zone and First Maharashtra State Conference on Adolescent Health, titled ADOLESCON 2025. With the theme **“Empowering Adolescents: Transforming Futures,”** the two-day event witnessed participation from over 500 attendees (256 in person and 261 online), including health experts, educators, parents and PG students, for multi-disciplinary discussions on adolescent health and development.



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The conference opened with a Youth Workshop, inaugurated by Dr. A. Rekha (Dean, Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College, Hospital & Research Centre, Pimpri, Pune), who was felicitated as the Chief Guest. Other dignitaries including Dr. Jayant Pandharikar (EB, West Zone, Central IAP) and Dr. Shailaja Mane (Professor and HOD of Paediatrics, Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College, Hospital & Research Centre, Pimpri, Pune) shared insights on the importance of adolescent-focused healthcare. The first day featured several impactful programs. A special paediatric workshop for postgraduate students from Paediatric provided academic and clinical exposure in adolescent health. A School Health Program, coordinated by Dr. Shradha Salunkhe, was conducted at Global International School, engaging over 150 students in sessions on mental well-being, social media behaviour, and decision-making.

Another key initiative was Empower Yuva, a session led by Dr. Sangeeta Lodha, which addressed key aspects of youth wellness, including physical, digital, sexual, and psychosocial health. The program was interactive and focused on empowering

adolescents with tools for better self-awareness and resilience. Simultaneously, a session titled “Parenteening: for Parents of Teenagers” was conducted for parents, with a turnout of around 120-150 attendees, addressing practical parenting strategies and enhancing parent-adolescent communication. The event was led by Dr. Jayant Pandarekar.

The Youth Workshop included over 40 expert-led sessions, conducted in hybrid mode, covering essential topics such as psychosocial development, identity formation, hormonal changes and behavioural concerns like delayed puberty and peer influence. Speakers such as Dr. Mahesh Sulakshane, Dr. Vinita Pande and Dr. Kiran Vaswani focused on mental health, suicide prevention, reproductive health and adolescent violence etc.

Discussions on Nutrition and Lifestyle were led by Dr. Shailaja Mane and Dr. Swati Waghmare who emphasized healthy habits, exercise and adequate sleep. A dedicated session on Adolescent Healthcare Delivery addressed communication, confidentiality and behaviour change strategies, with insights from Dr. Nishikant Kowal, Dr. Beena Desai and Dr. Anita Mangla. Vulnerable groups were also addressed in sessions on adolescents with special needs, substance abuse, and peer pressure, led by experts such as Dr. Hemant Joshi and Dr. Bal Krishna Garud.

Hands-on learning continued with a Clinical Skills and Case-Based Learning module that showcased examination techniques and real-life case discussions on conditions like PCOS, presented by Dr. Abhijit Aphale and Dr. Satish Visnoi. One of the most engaging segments of Day 1 was the Panelyashod Discussion and Public Forum, moderated by Dr. Jayant Pandharipkar, which facilitated open dialogue between parents, adolescents, and healthcare professionals, focusing on issues such as mobile addiction, peer pressure and digital influence on youth behaviour.

The second day featured the Scientific Conference, where a

series of focused sessions brought together diverse medical professionals, mental health experts and adolescent advocates. Critical topics such as anxiety, depression, body image issues and suicide prevention were discussed in depth by speakers like Dr. Vaishali Deshmukh, Dr. Paula Goel, and Dr. Shamik Ghosh.

A notable session titled **“Gen Z: Values and Views,”** moderated by Dr. Nishikant Kowal and Dr. Geeta Patil, provided a platform for youth to voice their concerns and perspectives. Panellists included Dr. Sangeeta Lodha, Dr. Sampada Tumbolkar and Master Rohit Diwate, who shared insights into the evolving attitudes and behaviours of the new generation.

Adding to the pride of the institution, Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College, Hospital & Research Centre was recognized during the event for being honoured with the prestigious IBCLC Care Award 2025-2027 by the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) and the International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA), USA. The hospital is now the first and only hospital in India to receive this award for two consecutive terms, in recognition of its sustained excellence in lactation and breastfeeding support services.

Hon’ble Dr. Bhagyashree P. Patil, Pro-Chancellor, Dr. D.Y. Patil Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University), Pimpri, Pune, emphasized the importance of such outreach. She said, *“Adolescents today are navigating complex emotional, social and digital environments. Through this school health programme, we are planting the seeds of awareness, resilience and responsibility in the young minds of our community. Such outreach is essential in shaping a healthier and more informed future generation.”*

Hon’ble Dr. Yashraj Patil, Trustee & Treasurer, Dr. D.Y. Patil Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University), Pimpri, Pune, added, *“We believe in empowering our youth through health education that goes beyond textbooks. This programme reaffirms our commitment*

to holistic learning and community engagement, ensuring that students are not just academically sound but also emotionally and socially aware."

Dr. Rekha Arcot, Dean of Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College, Hospital & Research Centre, Pimpri, Pune, said, *"The School Health Programme is a reflection of our proactive role in public health and adolescent care. Our expert faculty has done commendable work in connecting with students on relevant issues that impact their daily lives."*

Dr. Shailaja Mane, Head of the Department of Paediatrics, Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College, Hospital & Research Centre, Pimpri, Pune, stated, *"Health awareness must begin early and in the right context. By combining medical expertise with sessions of Gen Z, youth forum by UNICEF and plenary session on noncommunicable diseases, we are actively contributing to the creation of a healthier youth population."*

The conference concluded with a UNICEF plenary session and Youth Forum, which included a session on non-communicable diseases by Dr. Mrudula Phadke. The forum emphasized the importance of integrating Gen Z voices into public health policy and advocating for continued support, early intervention and inclusive programming for adolescent health.

ADOLESCON 2025 marked a significant step forward in adolescent healthcare awareness and advocacy, reinforcing Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College's leadership in addressing the multidimensional needs of India's youth.

About Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College, Hospital and Research Centre, Pimpri, Pune

Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College, Hospital & Research Centre, Pimpri, Pune follows international benchmarks that are performance-driven as well as patient-centric, strongly backed by evidence-based medical expertise. We are NABH and NABL accredited and have been certified as a Green Hospital by the

Association of Healthcare Providers India (AHPI). Additionally, we hold the 11th rank in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF). The university has been awarded A++ status by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and is an ISO 2015 certified organization (ISO 9001: 2015).

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