

Status of Bio-Medical Waste in Delhi



Toxics Link
for a toxics-free world

ROUNDTABLE MEETING REPORT

Organized by Toxics Link
HE HANS, NEW DELHI
17-12-2019

Minutes of the Meeting: 'Status of Bio-Medical Waste in Delhi'

Introduction

Toxics Link organized a round-table meeting on 17th December, 2019 to evaluate the status of implementation of Bio-Medical Waste Rules, 2016 in Delhi and discuss the way forward with the stakeholders present for the meeting. The roundtable was attended by various stakeholders from government, healthcare facilities, policy groups, associations and bio medical waste management company. Welcoming the audience, **Mr. Satish Sinha**, Toxics Link emphasized on the need to look and ponder on the gaps persisting in management of Bio Medical Waste and expressed his disappointment at the current state of bio medical waste in



Figure 1 Mr. Satish Sinha setting the tone for the meeting

Delhi as well as in the country, even after two decades of introduction of the Rules. After a brief round of introduction, the findings from Toxics Link's report '**Spreading Infections: Healthcare Facilities in Delhi**' were presented.

Bio-Medical Waste Management in Delhi: Is it being managed well?

Toxics Link in its recent report has evaluated the current practices of Bio-medical waste management in bedded healthcare facilities in Delhi- in terms of segregation, storage, transportation and disposal. The study also



Figure 2 Participants in the BMW roundtable conference

investigated illegal practices, including waste dumping and assessed the challenges faced on ground by stakeholders. 38 assessment surveys were conducted in bedded healthcare facilities across Delhi. The survey was carried out covering all the 11 districts of Delhi.

Sharing the findings from the study, **Ms. Priti Mahesh**, Toxics Link drew the attention of the participants towards incorrect information available



Figure 3: Ms. Priti Mahesh sharing the findings of Toxics Link report on BMW status in Delhi

on the number of healthcare facilities operating in Delhi as well as on the amount of bio medical waste generated in the capital. She shared Toxics Link's failed effort to get the information from Delhi Pollution Control Committee through RTI. She raised a critical question on the efficacy of monitoring in absence of such data and information. Outlining the positive findings from the study, she said that most large hospitals, both private and government, had good infrastructure and were following proper segregation systems. However, a major gap was seen in handling of needles, as 27.3% HCFs visited did not have needle cutters. The study also found that many healthcare facilities were using open dustbins without bio hazard symbol, which were manually operated and thus posing risk to waste workers within the facility. Ms. Mahesh emphasized on the concerns of occupational safety, with a large number of waste handling staff not using all personal protective equipment. The risk from needle injuries was also clear from the fact that 36% of nurses still were recapping syringes. The study reported the problems with intramural transport systems and open storage of waste. Another lacuna was seen in the waste records, as in most facilities it seemed incorrect and done merely to fulfil the Rules requirements. One major issue raised by Ms. Mahesh was the handling of liquid waste, as the study reported 26.4% of the hospitals letting it out directly to public drainage.

In smaller HCF, there were serious gaps observed in segregation, transport and storage. The study reports the appalling conditions of clinics which were defying the regulations, especially veterinary clinics. Some clinics were found giving expired medicines and some had blood stained disposal bags. Ms. Mahesh emphasized on the immediate need to draw attention towards clinics. The study also found needles, syringes, gloves, glass vials and dental casts mixed with solid waste in dumpsites. Waste pickers claimed that they found 10-12 needles on a daily basis and did get needle stick injuries. She also raised the point about increasing medical waste from households. Ms Mahesh summarised the key gaps and discussion points after which the floor was opened for discussion.

Major Points of Discussions

The discussion was moderated by Mr. Satish Sinha, who started with drawing focus upon lack of transparency on functioning of Common Bio-Medical Waste Treatment Facilities (CBWTF), which are the final step in managing this infectious waste.

Mr. Bishwanath Singh, Veteran's Forum, pointed out at lack of inventory and the situation in handling the liquid waste as many ETPs/STPs are either not functioning or not doing the needful. He asserted at need for the government agencies to regulate the same. He highlighted some points from the PIL he had filed in Bihar and Delhi on BMW Rules, which clearly showed lack of implementation at state levels.

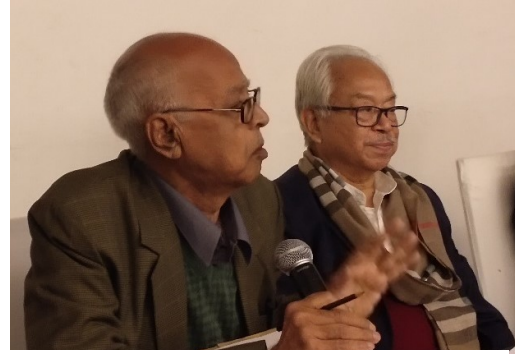


Figure 4 Mr. Singh expressing his views



Figure 5: Mr. Sharma sharing his opinions

Dr. Sandeep Sharma, IMA, pointed out at the grey areas and loopholes in the regulations. He specifically mentioned that in Delhi though action is being taken against non-complying HCFs, CBWTFs continue to flout the Rules and not penalised as their closure would leave the system crippled. Ms. Mahesh mentioned that Delhi is already looking at more CBWTFs and that may resolve this concern and also urged the HCFs to be watchdogs as the Rules do give that power to them.

Dr. Daga, MAMC Hospital, drew attention towards lack of manpower in hospitals as well as government regulatory agencies as a major challenge in implementation of BMW Rules. In absence of regular training, workers remain unaware and engage in pilferage. He agreed with the study findings that household Bio-Medical Waste is being generated at a rapid rate and unfortunately does not come under the ambit of the rules.

Mr. Deepa Rai, District Nodal Officer, South Delhi, noted that there is a gap in implementation of BMW Rules in bedded and non-bedded healthcare facilities where non bedded facilities remain largely uninformed of



Figure 6: Dr. Daga raising some crucial points

the rule and there is a lacuna in interpretation as well. This was largely corroborated by Toxics Link report as well.

Mr. Ankit Gupta, Biotic Waste Solutions Pvt. Ltd., representing the CBWTFs, replied to some questions raised on CBWTF functioning and said that it may not be feasible for them to allow HCFs or other organization to visit CBWTF without any notice as it can hamper their functioning.



Figure 7 Dr. Garima Jaiswal expressing her opinion

During the discussion **Dr Garima Jaiswal**, District Nodal Officer, South East Delhi expressed her opinion on the limitations of the functions of DLMC, which is just a monitoring committee. The committee reports its findings to DPCC for action but most times there is lack of measures from DPCC. She also shared that at times, IMA has been informing the HCFs in advance, which defeats the purpose of monitoring.

Dr. Gunjan Garg, CDMO Shahdara, focused the discussion on PHC where there is a lack of supply of equipment, including bins, needle cutters etc. and also the lack of knowhow on managing liquid waste.

Dr. Girish Tyagi, DMC, clarified that most clinics are registered with DPCC. But all of them are not signing up with CBWTFs as they do not generate any waste in their facilities. He shared that such clinics are giving an affidavit about no BMW generation and getting exemption. He suggested serious action against clinics which are found guilty of non-compliance and said that DMC will certainly support that.

Ananya Tewari, PHFI shared about the training material that she is involved in developing and sought some clarifications. **Dr Sudhakar Vira**, **Sir Gangaram Hosrpital**, raised the confusion related to blue bin in Bio-medical waste as well as in Solid waste management Rules. He also sought some help from the group as the Solid Waste management collection agency has refused to pick up waste from the hospital and is asking for some fee. **Ms Nikita**, **Assistant Director, Environment, NPC** also shared that NPC has been looking at feasibility of new CBWTFs to treat Delhi's waste. Ankit Gupta, said that the waste prices need to be revised as they are very low.

Recommendations



Figure 8 Discussions during the round table meeting

Findings of the report, **‘Spreading Infections: Healthcare Facilities in Delhi?’** was well received in the meeting and the workshop was concluded by Mr. Satish Sinha with a revisit to the recommendations to take the issue forward. Some of the important recommendations came out during the meeting were as follows:

- Inventorization of all healthcare facilities which come under the ambit of Bio-Medical Waste Rules.
- Strengthening of knowledge products related to Bio Medical Waste Management for improving on ground implementation.
- Surprise Visits from government nodal agencies and civil societies at healthcare facilities as well as CBWTF need to be conducted. The gaps in implementation should be noted and training should be done accordingly
- Need for a guidelines, solutions and advertisement for management of Bio-medical waste being generated at household level and chemists.
- Need for guidelines and solutions for management of Liquid Bio-medical waste from PHCs, mohalla clinics or any facility which has a laboratory.
- Training and immunization of workers should be conducted at the time of induction, records should be maintained for the same and submitted in the annual report.
- The District Magistrate should be using their implicit authority to take action against the health care facilities on the basis of the report of DLMC.
- More clarity is required on functioning of ETP/ STP in healthcare facilities and the powers of state/ central government authorities in the same.

List of Attendees

Name	Designation	Organization
Ananya Tewari	Senior Research Associate	PHFI
Ankit Gupta	Marketing Head	Biotic Waste Solutions Pvt. Ltd.
Bishwanath Singh		Veteran's Forum
Col. Shiv Rana		Veteran's Forum
Dr. Arvind Achra	Assistant Professor	RML Hospital
Dr. Daga	Director- Professor	Department of Medicine, MAMC
Dr. Deepa Rai	District Nodal Officer	South District DLMC
Dr. Garima Jaiswal	District Nodal Officer	South East DLMC
Dr. Girish Tyagi	President	Delhi Medical Conference
Dr. Gunjan Garg	Pathologist	CDMO Office; Shahdara District
Dr. Gurpreet Kaur	Pathologist	West District
Dr. Kalpana V. Ramani		CDMO, Central District
Dr. Naburna Dass		North District

Dr. Prashant Sharma	DNO	CDMO NED
Dr. Ritu Chaudhary	Nodal Officer	
Dr. Sudhakar Vira		Sir Ganga Ram Hospital
Dr. Sunita Prasad	CDMO	West District
Kishan Lal		GTB Hospital
Kopal Dixit	Programme Officer, Waste and Sustainability	Toxics Link
Major Kr. Suresh Rana		Veteran Forum
Manjusha Mukherjee	Programme Coordinator , Waste and Sustainability	Toxics Link
Nikita	Assistant Director, Environment	NPC
Priti Mahesh	Chief Programme Coordinator	Toxics Link
Ruby Rani	Senior Programme Officer, Information and Communication	Toxics Link
Satish Sinha	Associate Director	Toxics Link
Sherry Pande	Programme Officer, Waste and Sustainability	Toxics Link
Vinod Sharma	Programme Officer, Waste and Sustainability	Toxics Link