



## श्री चित्रा तिरुनाल आयुर्विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, त्रिवेंद्रम

विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग, भारत सरकार के अधीन एक राष्ट्रीय महत्व का संस्थान

**SREE CHITRA TIRUNAL INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES & TECHNOLOGY, TRIVANDRUM**

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### Invitation to attend the Achutha Menon Centre seminar

We are pleased to invite you to attend the AMC seminar by:

#### **Dr Rohina Joshi,**

**Associate Professor**, Global Health Lead, School of Population Health, University of New South Wales, Australia  
**Senior Manager**, The George Institute for Global Health, India ; **Honorary Senior Research Fellow**, The George Institute, Sydney, Australia.

on the topic:

**“Scale-up of SmartVA for physicians, an electronic decision support tool to improve death certification in The Philippines.”**

on **17<sup>th</sup> April, Monday, 9.30 AM to 11.00 AM**, at the **Seminar hall, third floor, Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies** of the Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute of Medical Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum.

A short bio of the speaker is attached herewith.

We look forward to your participation in this seminar.

Yours sincerely

**Dr Biju Soman | डॉ. बिजु सोमन,**

Professor & Head | प्राध्यापक और प्रमुख,

Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies | अच्युत मेनोन स्वास्थ्य विज्ञान अध्ययन केंद्र,

Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology, Trivandrum-695011|

श्री चित्रा तिरुनाल आयुर्विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, त्रिवेन्द्रम-695011,

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(एक राष्ट्रीय महत्व का संस्थान, विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग, भारत सरकार).

## About the speaker

### Dr Rohina Joshi

MBBS (Christian Medical College, Ludhiana, India, 2000)

Master of Public Health (Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies, SCTIMST, 2002)

Doctor of Philosophy (University of Sydney, Australia, 2006) Thesis title “Causes of death in Rural Andhra Pradesh, India”

Certificate in Executive Management and Development (Australian Graduate School of Management, UNSW, Australia)

### Present affiliations

Associate Professor Global Health Lead, School of Population Health, University of New South Wales, Australia

Senior Manager, The George Institute for Global Health, India (2018-current)

Honorary Senior Research Fellow, The George Institute, Sydney, Australia (2021-current)

**Dr.Rohina** Joshi is a Scientia Fellow at the University of New South Wales, and Lead of the Global Health Research at the School of Population Health, UNSW. She is a recipient of the Future Leader Fellowship from the National Heart Foundation. A/Prof Joshi is a global health and health systems researcher working on developing low-cost healthcare models to deliver comprehensive primary health care and improving health information systems in low- and middle-income countries. She was awarded the Sax Institute Research Action Award for improving the quality of death certificates for home deaths in the Philippines in 2020. She is a technical advisor for the Bloomberg Philanthropies funded Data for Health Initiative, Co-Chair of the Global Alliance for Chronic Disease working group on Scale up of CVD interventions and technical advisor for the Mortality in India established through verbal autopsy (MINErVA, India). She has recently been appointed as the UNSW consortium lead for the Asia Pacific Observatory of Health Systems and Policies.

She has published >150 peer reviewed papers, three book chapters, and five working paper series with publications in high impact journals such as New England Journal of Medicine, the Lancet, Circulation and Journal of American College of Cardiology. She has secured > 27 million as an Investigator from Australian and other global funding agencies (\$3 million as CIA).

## **Abstract for the talk**

### **Title: Scale-up of SmartVA for physicians, an electronic decision support tool to improve death certification in The Philippines**

**Background:** The majority of deaths in the Philippines occur out-of-facility and require a medical certificate of cause of death by Municipal Health Officers (MHOs) for burial. MHOs lack a standardised certification process for out-of-facility deaths and when no medical records are available, certify a high proportion of ill-defined causes of death. We aimed to develop and introduce SmartVA Auto-Analyse, a verbal autopsy (VA) based electronic decision support tool in order to assist the MHOs in certifying out-of-facility deaths.

**Method:** We conducted a stakeholder consultation, process mapping and a pre-test to assess feasibility and acceptability of SmartVA Auto-Analyse. MHOs were first asked to conduct an open-ended interview from the family members of the deceased, and if they were not able to arrive at a diagnosis, continue the interview using the standardised SmartVA questionnaire. Auto-Analyse then presented the MHO with the three most likely causes of death. For the pilot, the intervention was scaled-up to 91 municipalities. We performed a mixed-methods evaluation using the cause of death data and group discussions with the MHOs.

**Results:** Of the 5649 deaths registered, Auto-Analyse was used to certify 4586 (81%). For the remaining 19%, doctors believed they could assign a cause of death based on the availability of medical records and the VA open narrative. When used, physicians used the Auto-Analyse diagnosis in 85% of cases to certify the cause of death. Only 13% of the deaths under the intervention had an undetermined cause of death. Group discussions identified two themes: Auto-Analyse standardized the certification of home deaths and assisted the MHOs to improve the quality of death certification.

**Conclusion:** Standardized VA combined with physician diagnosis using the SmartVA Auto-Analyse support tool was readily used by MHOs in the Philippines and can improve the quality of death certification of home deaths.