

## Chennai gets India's first heart implant training centre

India has got its first training centre for doctors to learn how to place implants in the heart.

Medtronic, a US-based medical technology service provider, opened its first therapy and procedure training centre (TPTC) in South Asia, in [Chennai](#) Saturday.

A recent report in the premier medical journal The Lancet has said that by 2010, 60 percent of the world's heart patients will be in India. The majority of these patients will suffer from cardiac arrhythmias, heart failure and coronary artery diseases.

Implantable cardiac devices such as pacemakers, de-fibrillators, cardiac therapy devices and coronary stents play a major role in the treatment of these life-threatening conditions.

The process of implanting these cardiac devices is complex and requires highly specialised and technically skilled practitioners.

Launched in 2004, Medtronic has a TPTC mobile unit that travels all over the US, training doctors. It has, so far, trained over 8,500 physicians, nurses and other health professionals via its mobile training unit.

It also has 18 virtual training labs throughout the world, including in the US, central America, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, half a dozen European countries, China, Japan and Australia.

The Chennai centre, the first in India, is aimed at increasing the number of heart specialists who will know how implant life saving devices in heart patients.

The centre's state-of-the-art classroom and programmer lab will provide training to cardiologists on the programming and follow-up management of these devices. Besides hands-on training, there will also be simulator-equipped class rooms at the centre.

'The therapy and procedure training centre in Chennai is an example of effective training and education used by the company worldwide,' Joon Hurh, Medtronic's regional vice president, said on the occasion.

'As more people around the world are in need of implanted medical devices like pacemakers, ICD's and other cardiac devices, so too is the growing need for well-trained clinicians to care for these patients,' said Milind Shah, managing director, Medtronic India.

'India has a small number of electro-physiologists (just about 50) who implant high-end devices like CRTs and ICDs to manage heart failures and reduce mortality due to sudden cardiac arrest (SCA).'

'Medtronic is committed to increasing this number in India so that physicians are able to deliver these therapies effectively to more and more patients who need them,' Shah said.

The use of simulators is quickly becoming a standard approach to Medtronic training programmes.

Introduced in 2003, Medtronic's virtual labs with state-of-the-art simulator technology provide a safe

way for physicians to develop the skills and confidence to implant devices, and for other health professionals to better understand the implantation process, 'with life-like implant scenario', the company said.

The simulators are designed to provide a safe environment in which to learn new techniques while avoiding complications and minimising costs.

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