

Sat Paul Mittal Memorial Lecture Series 2025

Advancing Public Health through Innovation and Implementation

September 9-11, 2025

The Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD), in collaboration with Panjab University, Chandigarh, and the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Delhi University, successfully organized a two-part Sat Paul Mittal Memorial Lecture Series on September 9–10, 2025, featuring renowned global public health expert **Prof. Judd L. Walson** from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, USA.



1. Lecture at Panjab University, Chandigarh

Turning Knowledge into Action: The Role of Implementation Science in Public Health

Panjab University, Chandigarh | September 9, 2025

The lecture hosted by Panjab University, thought leaders came together to discuss a pressing challenge in global health: Why do proven public health solutions often fail to reach the people who need them most?

Chaired by Prof. Renu Vig, Vice Chancellor of Panjab University, and attended by Mr. Avinash Rai Khanna, Ex-MP and Vice Chair of IAPPD, the event focused on the theme **“Public Health in a Changing World: The Role of Implementation Science in Turning Evidence into Action.”**

The keynote speaker, Prof. Judd Walson, highlighted what he called the **“paradox of progress”**—even as child mortality has declined worldwide, many



life-saving interventions, such as Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS), still reach fewer than half of the children who need them in some countries.

Why Do Proven Interventions Fall Short?

Prof. Walson tackled the big question: If we know what works, why don't we always do it?

The answer, he explained, lies in a web of challenges:

- Policies are often created but not properly implemented.
- Sometimes, policies exist but external barriers—like funding or logistics—block progress.
- In other cases, there's no policy at all.

Conflicting data, lack of political will, and weak delivery systems further complicate matters. Governments don't directly deliver interventions—they deliver **programs**, which must be well-designed and well-run to succeed. And that's where **implementation science** comes in.

Bridging the “Know-Do” Gap

This persistent disconnect between knowing what works and actually doing it is called the “**Know-Do Gap**.”

For example:

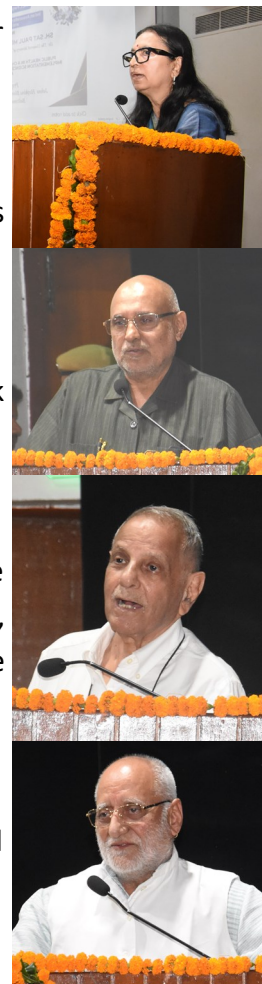
- While 94% of women globally receive at least one antenatal care visit, that number drops to 72% in low-income countries.
- Globally, 96% of births are attended by skilled health personnel, but only 47% are in low-income regions.

Measles vaccine coverage is 93% worldwide, yet only 77% in poorer countries.

These disparities highlight the urgent need for strategies that ensure **equitable and effective delivery** of healthcare.

What Is Implementation Science?

Implementation Science (IS) focuses on **how** to deliver proven health interventions in real-world settings. Unlike clinical research, which tests if something works under ideal conditions, IS looks at **what actually works in practice**—and how to improve it.



Question-Answer Session

It examines everything from social and economic factors to program design and political context. The goal? To deliver what works, **with speed, quality, and reach.**

A Case Study: Fighting Parasitic Infections

The lecture explored how IS is applied in efforts to eliminate **Soil-Transmitted Helminths (STH)**—common intestinal parasites—through **Mass Drug Administration (MDA)**.

To ensure these programs are successful, researchers must ask:

- Where should they prioritize the rollout?
- Is the health system ready?
- Are communities and stakeholders on board?
- How do we monitor progress and ensure fairness?
- Can we sustain drug donations long-term?
- Is disease elimination even possible?

To guide this, they use a **Target Policy Profile (TPoP)**—a strategic blueprint for scaling effective programs.

From Evidence to Impact

The lecture ended with a powerful quote from Dr. Paul B. Batalden:

“Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets.”

The message was clear: It's not enough to know what works in theory. To save lives and improve health worldwide, we need to focus on **how to make it work—at scale, with quality, and for everyone.**

Implementation Science gives us the tools to do just that—bridging the gap between research and real change in a rapidly evolving world.



2. Lecture at Institute of Economic Growth

Advancing Child Survival through Public Health Innovation, September 10, 2025

The second Sat Paul Mittal Memorial Lecture, in collaboration with the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Delhi University, was organized on September 10, 2025, at the IEG campus.

Dr. Walson spoke on the theme: “Public Health in a Changing World: Improvement in Child Survival through a Risk-Stratified Approach.”

The session was presided over by Prof. P.J. Kurien, Chairman, IAPPD, while Prof. Sabyasachi Kar, Director of IEG, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

Prof. Walson drew upon his extensive field experience, beginning with his early work in the remote hill regions of Nepal, where he witnessed firsthand the devastating impact of poverty and malnutrition on child mortality. Highlighting



that nearly half of all child deaths are linked to malnutrition, he emphasized the often-overlooked condition of stunting as a key indicator of chronic under-nutrition.

He also pointed out that infectious diseases remain a leading cause of child deaths, and that risk is not evenly distributed—even within countries. Using data from Brazil, he demonstrated how children in the lowest income quintiles face over five times the risk of under-five mortality compared to those in the highest quintile, underscoring the importance of a risk-stratified public health approach.

The lecture brought together policymakers, academics, and public health professionals to discuss innovative strategies for reducing child mortality in the face of global health challenges.

Question-Answer Session



3. Interaction with Prof. Judd Walson on Health Advocacy and Diplomacy

IAPPD Committee Room, New Delhi, September 11, 2025

IAPPD organized an interactive session with Prof. Judd Walson on "Sharing of Experiences on Advocacy/Diplomacy on Health-Related Issues" on September 11, 2025, at the IAPPD Committee Room.

The session was chaired by Prof. P.J. Kurien, Chairman, IAPPD, and witnessed the participation of Mr. Deepender Hooda, MP and Vice Chairman, IAPPD; Mrs. Viplove Thakur, Vice Chair, IAPPD; and Mr. Prem Mittal, Trustee, IAPPD, along with other invited experts on population and health and Technical Advisory Committee Members of IAPPD.

Prof. Walson shared valuable insights from his global experience in public health advocacy, focusing on the importance of strategic communication, political engagement, and data-driven policy in addressing health challenges.

The interaction fostered a meaningful exchange on strengthening health diplomacy and the role of parliamentarians in advancing public health agendas.

