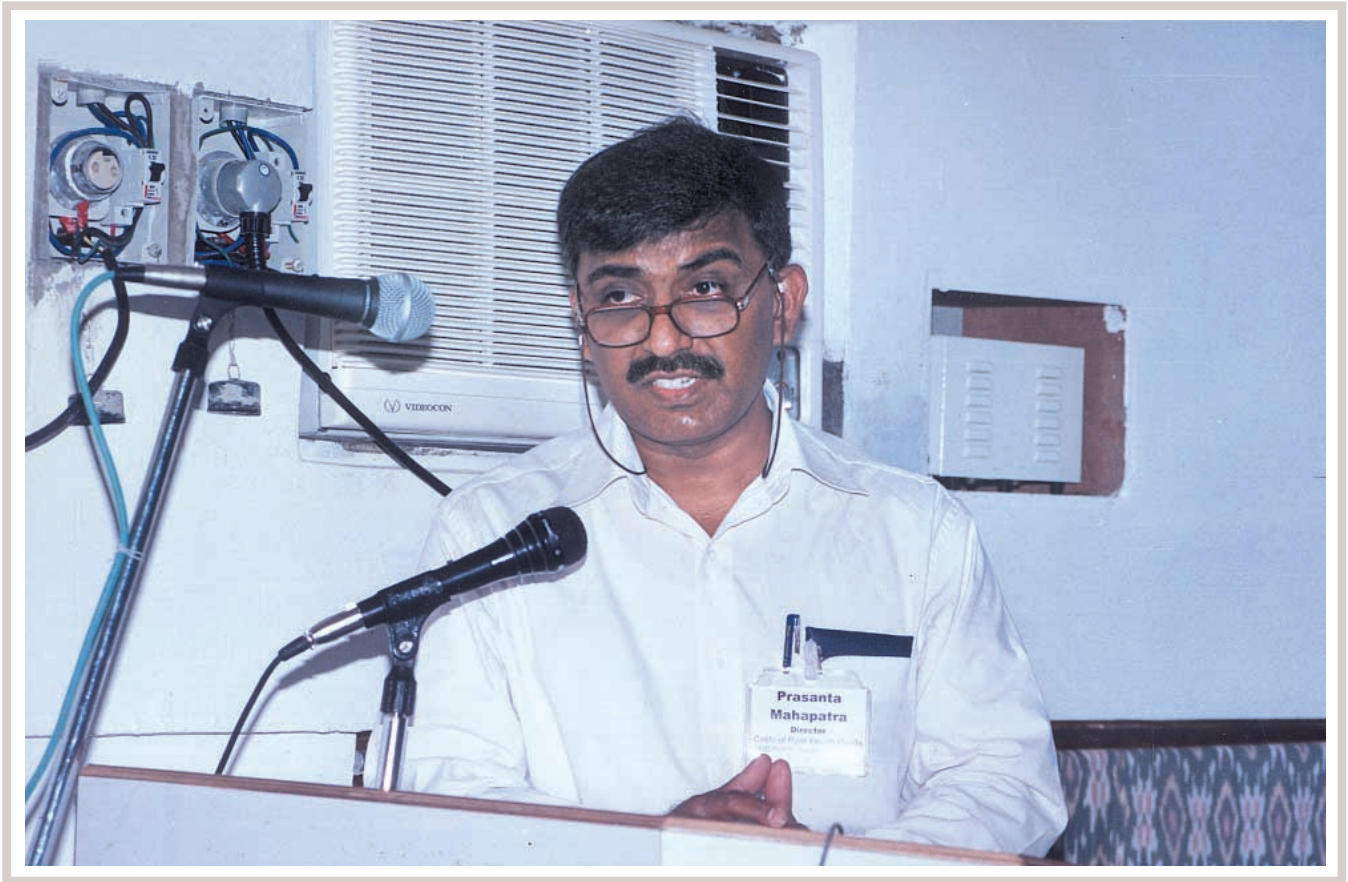




Hill Fort Road Entrance of the Institute

Welcome and Introduction



Dr. Prasanta Mahapatra
MBBS, D.Sc., I.A.S.
Director, IHS



Public health in the 21st century faces daunting challenges in developing countries like India. In spite of many advances in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of infectious diseases, a substantial burden of disease in our country continues to be on account of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, diarrhoeal diseases, and respiratory infections. Increasing life expectancy and urbanization with accompanying lifestyle changes have led to an epidemiological transition, as evidenced by an increasing incidence of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and cancers. Our diverse population suffers huge disparities in health and access to health care, which are related to differences in socioeconomic status, gender, location, and environment. The vast majority of the nation's investment on health has focussed on the delivery of medical technological services. This has led to a number of disconnected agencies, programmes and initiatives, most of which focus on particular diseases, risk factors or services rather than on the integrated needs of the people and the community. These developments are occurring as the wider environment in which public health is practiced is undergoing a radical transformation. The public health system in our country is struggling to survive in a rapidly changing milieu of expectations, opportunities, risks and adverse consequences spawned by demographic changes, globalization, privatization and increasing demands on our health care systems and financial resources.

Undoubtedly, there has been substantial improvement in the health status of the people of India. At the time of independence, the infant mortality rate was above 200 per thousand live births and life expectancy at birth was around 32 years. By the turn of the present century, infant mortality rate declined to less than 70 and life expectancy at birth increased to around 64 years. A significant proportion of these achievements are attributable to improvement in sanitation, water supply, food security, public distribution, poverty alleviation and literacy programmes rather than advances in clinical medicine. It is now widely recognized that the state of health, of any population, is the result of a complex interaction of many social services. That is why public health disciplines like demography, epidemiology, health care management, health economics, health systems research etc., are becoming important players in health policy formulation and management of services, worldwide. The increasing application of these disciplines in public health has created a demand for manpower with multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary skills.

The Institute of Health Systems (IHS) is an autonomous research and educational institution engaged in public health research, training and consultancy. The Institute fosters a team of faculty from multiple disciplines, and strives to provide an environment for intellectual development, knowledge based work, and development of public health skills required for social services delivery in India and other developing countries. The Institute's academic programs, are designed to develop public health research capacity, analytical skills for health policy making, and human resources for health care delivery. We endeavor to prepare professionals who not only have mastered a rigorous academic programme in public health but who have also honed their skills in public health practice. Our strong links with other academic and service units such as the World Health Organization (WHO), Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH), The Health Level Seven Organization, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), National Institute of Health and Family Welfare (NIHFW), NTR University of Health Sciences and Central and State Ministries of Health and Family Welfare, ensures the consistent exchange between academia and practice that keeps them relevant and responsive to each other.

We seek students from all backgrounds who have a vision to work for public health and a commitment to perfection, although excellence will be tolerated. In turn, we are committed to providing world class training to each of our students in a challenging and supportive atmosphere. This prospectus detail the highlights of our Advanced Studies in Public Health programme. I invite you to take a closer look and see why the Institute is a special place to study and learn. I look forward to meet some of you and work with you to realize a healthy and better performing health system.

Sincerely,
Dr. Prasanta Mahapatra
Director, IHS



Dr. C.K. George
M.B.B.S., MCH
APH Programme Co-ordinator



he key step towards a successful career is to grab opportunities or accept challenges and convert them into opportunities. To take care of India's billion people and serve the world, we have to develop the health care system. Poorly developed health care system is a constraint. At one end this is depressing. On the other hand we can accept this challenge and work to transform our health system. This is the opportunity. For this, we need to have better trained public health professionals with multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary skills. And that is what the Advanced Studies in Public Health (APH) programme at the IHS, is all about.

The APH programme is an important part of the Institute's activity. The multidisciplinary nature of the programme and the diverse backgrounds of the many people involved, contributes to a broader appreciation of public health issues. The high academic standards maintained at the IHS and the wide range of research pursued by our faculty enriches the quality and range of the programme. Our students make an important contribution to the success of the programme. The collective experience and range of applied perspectives of students in the programme, and the opportunities for interaction with the experts in respective fields create an environment where locally relevant public health issues can be studied systematically, and where the challenges facing public health can be openly and constructively debated. By providing such opportunities, the programme helps to advance thinking in public health, develops public health knowledge and skills in the country, and promotes the establishment of networks in the multidisciplinary public health workforce.

As a public health professional, I can confidently say that APH programme is truly world class and if such an opportunity was available when I started my career, I would have definitely taken advantage of it. Our students have a deep commitment to public health and a strong determination to improve the health care system. They are the new public health pioneers. I invite you to be a part of this team. We look forward to work with you to explore new ways to meet the public health challenges and to create opportunities for health system development.

Sincerely
Dr. C.K. George