

The Apollo University Workshop Empowers Physiotherapists for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

14 and 15th July, 2025

Chittoor

The Faculty of Physiotherapy, Division of Allied Health Sciences, School of Health Sciences, The Apollo University (TAU) organized a successful two-day workshop themed “Therapy to Tech: Physio Startups & Intellectual Property Demystified” on 14 and 15 July 2025 at the Dr. Prathap C. Reddy Knowledge Centre Auditorium. This initiative sought to close the gap between clinical expertise and entrepreneurial innovation in the area of physiotherapy and highlight the limitless future potential for physiotherapists to become innovators and entrepreneurs.

The function was inaugurated at 9:30 AM by Dr. H. Vinod Bhat, Hon’ble Vice Chancellor of TAU, who was invited as the Chief Guest. In his keynote address, Dr. Bhat mentioned how important initiatives like this are for modern universities, emphasizing that academics, teaching, and examinations form the commonplace functions of a university, and that an archetypal university would distinguish its usefulness by encouraging innovation, startups, and development of intellectual property. He used various models of global successes as examples such as FedEx, and when talking about his vision for the incubation centre at TAU, he said that he envisioned it as a flourishing idea bank that could develop student concepts into services or products for multi-national corporations having a positive impact on the world. He was proud to announce that this was the third IPR workshop in TAU over a three-month period, and that TAU is firm in its commitment to innovation-led learning.

The first day included stimulating sessions by Dr. Prasanna Mohan, Ph.D., Professor, Krupanidhi College of Physiotherapy, Bengaluru, who delivered a comprehensive talk on "Innovation, Ideation, and IPR in Physiotherapy." In a way that brought clarity to often complicated concepts around patents, copyrights, and trademarks, he helped us see how physiotherapists can protect their one-of-a-kind treatment devices and treatment methods through IPR processes. He facilitated an ideation activity, wherein participants worked in teams to develop and pitch innovative startup ideas. The afternoon session included pragmatic guidance around how to initiate a patent application in India, as well as how to effectively protect intellectual property in today's ever-changing healthcare environment.

The second day continued with Dr. Cynthia Benedict J, MPT (Neurology), DYHE, Assistant Professor, Nehru College of Physiotherapy, Coimbatore, who delivered an inspirational session on the "Role of Startups in innovation." Dr. Cynthia provided real-life examples of physiotherapy-led ventures that have positively changed patient care, discussed how to build minimum viable products (MVPs), customer discovery, business

model generation, and startup funding strategies. The last part of the session allowed participants to pitch their ideas and receive ongoing feedback to give them the confidence to turn ideas into legitimate business.

The workshop also included interactive aspects on go-to-market strategies, customer validation, and storytelling techniques that matter when looking for funding and growing in the healthcare startup sector.

The attendees enjoyed day two by taking insights learned from case studies, conversations, and mentor comments. Learning about the journey from "therapy to tech" was interesting. The program was put together by the efforts of the team led by Prof. K Bhaskar Reddy, Dean, School of Health Sciences and Apollo Institute of Pharmaceutical Studies, Dr. V. Kiran, Principal, Apollo College of Physiotherapy, Dr. P. Sucharitha, HoD, Division of Allied Health Sciences and, Dr. M.L. RamyaKrishna, Assistant professor, and the organizing secretary from School of Health Sciences. Contributing to her organizational skills and professional knowledge, Dr. Ramya was a driving force behind the workshop's effective delivery and engaging atmosphere.

The end of the workshop included an open discussion and valedictory to allow for sharing reflections of their learning. Overall, "Therapy to Tech: Physio Startups & Intellectual Property Demystified", provided an innovative workshop, providing students, clinicians, and aspiring entrepreneurs with the tools of to innovate and become future leaders in physiotherapy and health tech.