



April at LVPEI

Patient satisfaction is fundamental to any organization's clinical care and there is an increasing need to constantly improve this. We have the good fortune of the guidance from Brian Lee, Chief Executive of Custom Learning Systems, and North America's leading expert in the field of world-class Patient Satisfaction. Operation Eyesight Universal has introduced Brian to us for which we are grateful. Our team is participating in a series of HCAPS Break through Webinars given by Brian and his group. (The **H**ospital **C**onsumer **A**ssessment of **H**ealthcare **P**roviders and **S**ystems (HCAPS) have become mandatory for the North American Hospitals and the reimbursement is linked to the HCAPS scores). This followed an initial visit by Brian to our Institute following which he offered to donate his expertise to our Institute.

Yet another cluster of five vision centres, taking the total to 108, was definitely a highlight for April. The combination of international partner, Lavelle fund of New York funding the equipment and training components, local donors providing the space for the centre, renovating and partially funding the operating costs for the first three years, has again made this happen. The one difference is that these centres are not linked to our secondary centre but a partner centre. If this works out, this opens up a whole new world of possibilities to scale up vision centres. The location happens to be in Srikakulam district, one of the least developed districts of Andhra Pradesh bordering Odisha (formerly Orissa). This again is the result of cumulative efforts of multiple groups across our Institute led by Varma, and I convey our appreciation to all of them.

One of the challenges in the area of low vision care is low level of awareness about the potential for rehabilitation for individuals with irreversible low vision and blindness, among eye care professionals. This month, we organized yet another Low Vision Awareness Programme intended to address this issue in these groups. Over 110 attended, comprising ophthalmologists and optometrists from all over India. We also had a couple of our clients, who have benefitted from these services, sharing their experiences which added to the impact of the Programme.

Our group was represented well in the World Ophthalmology Congress in Tokyo and the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery meeting in Boston, including presentations of invited talks, free papers, posters and instruction courses. Some of us also participated in the leadership meetings of these and other associated organizations. In addition, many other collaborative discussions occurred both with existing collaborators and the potential new ones. While this helps to enhance the image of the Institute internationally, it also increases the responsibility. Virender Sangwan was an invited speaker at the "Innovations in cornea around the world" where he spoke of his work in advancing the corneal stem cell transplantation techniques.



At the invitation of King Khaled Eye Hospital in Saudi Arabia, Virender Sangwan visited that centre along with one of our other researchers and helped in initiating the corneal stem cell work in that centre. This is an important development as ocular surface problems have high prevalence in this part of the world and this centre is a major resource for that region.

We are pleased that yet another grant from Microsoft has helped us to advance our work with people with irreversible low vision and blindness through the development of a Training Centre in Information Technology, which will go a long way in enhancing their chances of vocational rehabilitation.

Construction activity of the new building at the main campus (Kallam Anji Reddy campus) has begun to move more briskly. For those of you who remember the story of the transplanted banyan tree, I am happy to add the update that it is healthy and growing well at its new home.

Gullapalli N Rao