



July at LVPEI

While July was an eventful month with several meetings and workshops, it ended on a sad note. Our institute was founded and nurtured by the friendship, support and generosity of many individuals and organisations from around the world. Among those who helped us most, Brien Holden's name comes to the top. The encouragement and support provided by him in every possible way was unmatched. Another individual who was a pillar of strength was former President of India, Dr. Kalam - a collaborator, a guide and someone who gave generously of his time to us. Two of the most eminent people in their own worlds and yet who cared for our Institute. So the news of their sudden demise, within the space of a few hours, was like a bolt from the blue for us. All of us at LVPEI salute their memory and pledge to continue to build on their legacy.

LVPEI hosted yet another workshop along with the group from MIT Media Lab titled "ReDx" this month. Our "Innovation Centre" is focused on developing new technologies as well as disrupting existing technology to bring down the cost of care. In this year's annual workshop, groups from MIT Media Lab and LVPEI worked alongside with the students of engineering, technology and design from across India in a week-long programme. Prototypes of ophthalmic diagnostic equipment were designed and built during this period which offers lot of promise for the immediate future. We are excited about this new dimension of our Institute and its potential.

In July, we also hosted the meeting of the India ARVO Chapter for eye researchers from all over India. It is over two decades since our Institute initiated an annual meeting of a few people involved in eye research in India and formed the "Indian Eye Research Group". This group has grown over the years and has metamorphosed into the India chapter of the world's biggest eye research body, Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO), in the recent past. Around 200 registrants participated in this year's meeting with topics covering a wide spectrum of eye research in the country. Eye research is proliferating steadily in India. Through this body, we are looking at ways of disseminating this research culture across the medical schools and academic centres in India. If the progress in the past decade is any indication, the prognosis looks excellent for the growth of high quality eye research. This is all part of our Institute's commitment to research. Increasing availability of governmental funding, together with philanthropic support, has made this process relatively easier. Also accessible are some of the international funding opportunities like the one Prashant Garg succeeded in securing this month from the Wellcome Trust of United Kingdom. Wellcome Trust has indeed become one of our major supporters for research.

Our Institute is committed to human resource development in a significant way; and to meet the ever increasing demand from around the world, we are scaling up through expanding the programmes in all our tertiary care centres. The admission of the first batch of fellows at our newest tertiary campus is a part of this process. This campus had already commenced with the training of technicians and nurses earlier.



The 51st Indian Contact Lens Programme (ICLEP) was held successfully and this continues to draw large number of registrants. This is a major tribute to the legacy of Brien Holden, as this was his brainchild. His wish was to avoid contact lens related complications in Asian countries by imparting education to eye care professionals in all aspects of contact lens care on the eve of the entry of major contact lens manufacturers into these markets. He convinced Bausch and Lomb to provide funding for the programme. This programme helped transform contact lens care in India, and thousands of ophthalmologists, optometrists and opticians continue to be benefitted.

Record patient volume from a few of our campuses was very encouraging with both the older and the newer campuses being part of this phenomenon. Ramayamma International Eye Bank (RIEB) of our Hyderabad campus had the highest ever transplantations from its supply of corneas. Technology integration and Electronic Medical Records (EMR) will play a big role as we continue to cover larger volumes of people spread over larger geography. These are in the final stages of the process of integration and consolidate "One LVPEI".

Dr. F.C. Kohli, a long term trustee of LVPEI is considered the "Father of software technology" in India and is the Founder-Chairman of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), the biggest software technology corporation of India. The company honoured him for his contributions by funding the creation of "F C Kohli Research Centre" at the Indian Institute of Information Technology in Hyderabad, named after him. This was inaugurated this month by Mr. Cyrus Mistry, Chair of the Tata group of companies. Congratulations to Dr. Kohli for his well deserved honour.

As we are preparing to move our outpatient and surgical services to a new and expanded building on our Kallam Anji Reddy campus (our main campus), our first and former administrator of the Institute, Vijaya Ramam shared an interesting anecdote from our short history – the naming of our guest facility on this campus. "Sampenga" is a popular plant that spreads its pleasant fragrance at nights. This was planted in the central courtyard of the first building at the time of inception. It is now four storeys tall and is adjacent to the guest house spreading its fragrance there and hence this name "Sampenga". Like the Banyan tree that we have transplanted several months ago, Sampenga too is part of our history.

- Gullapalli N. Rao