



May at LVPEI

Since the inception of the Institute, the vision included a strong commitment to "Research" as a significant component of our work. Starting with the strong foundation laid for clinical research through proper and detailed documentation of medical records from day one, it has been an eventful journey for our "Research" component. Today, it extends to every area from basic sciences to outcomes research. Our group won many laurels both nationally and internationally, secured significant support through competitive grants both national and international and made a mark. The most important Eye Research Meeting in the world is the annual meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO), initially American which has now become more International. At this year's meeting, held this month, a "pink ribbon" was given to the top ten percent of the abstracts for either "hot" topics or those of relevance to lay people. Nine of the twelve abstracts submitted by our group received this recognition, to our delight. Congratulations to all these investigators. Our Associate Director of Research, Subho Chakrabarti, is inducted into yet another committee of ARVO increasing his involvement in ARVO significantly.

A new batch of graduate students and research fellows were inducted with an all-day orientation Programme. One major theme was to promote the Institute's culture of "Cross fertilization" of ideas among clinicians, basic researchers and public health researchers. Some of the alumni have spoken about the benefits of such a culture during their post-doctoral years. Many alumni are pursuing post-doctoral careers in well known Institutions and Universities abroad.

This month, Hyderabad (Kallam Anji Reddy campus) had one of the highest volumes of LASIK procedures. This increase in volume, without compromising our standards or values, in the face of some unhealthy practices outside, is a very encouraging sign. The quality of service coupled with a scientific approach to the application of this technique and the credibility of the Institute are the major contributing factors. Hopefully such signals would encourage our trainees in persisting with the path of ethical medical practice.

Once again, the support given by our Rehabilitation Centre helped several of our visually challenged clients to excel in their class ten examinations with the daughter of one of our colleagues doing particularly well. To all these youngsters and their mentors in the rehabilitation team, my special compliments.

Several colleagues received honours and awards from diverse organisations, both national and international, and to all of them my compliments. These continue to strengthen our credibility and enhance our image.

Retinoblastoma, a form of eye cancer in children, most prevalent in India, is the subject of attention this month. The "World Retinoblastoma Week" was celebrated during the month. A patients' forum and a blood donation drive were the prominent features. Greater awareness



can help in minimizing cases of delayed presentation as the difference between early and late diagnosis is saving the life, eye or vision of a child. In the treatment of these cases, whenever there is requirement of blood transfusion, it is provided free of cost by a local blood bank (NTR Memorial Trust). More than 200 of our colleagues donated their blood on a single day this month to support this case, amply demonstrating the practice of our value of “patient first”.

The story of a three year old from Pakistan with advanced retinoblastoma in one eye and early stage one in the other eye amply exemplifies the need for awareness and accessibility to this service. The eye with the advanced stage could not be saved while the other could be preserved. The parents had to cross the border between our countries (often considered not friendly), thirteen times. But all that was worthwhile given the happy ending. I am also delighted that the geographical location of our two countries is not a barrier to saving lives.

- Gullapalli N. Rao