



## **May 2020 at LVPEI**

May was a month of slow and steady resumption of our activities. After much discussion and elaborate planning, our team has decided on a phased return to our various activities. Clinical services were resumed on the 4th of May with deliberately low numbers along with tele-ophthalmology services. Three teams worked on two days each week and each team included staff from all cadres. The systems of safety and quality control were developed by the quality team, Subhadra Jalali, Savitri Sharma and Anshu Bhargava, ably supported by the Directors of various campuses and their teams. This team effort took off quite well. Many patients expressed their appreciation for the safety measures that are in place at the Institute at all levels.

After a two week experience through the new system, more patients were accommodated starting 18th of May. While the volume of patients increased steadily, the volume of non-paying patients was very low due to non-availability of transportation. Overall, the month ended uneventfully reaching around 20-25 percent of pre-COVID numbers. Throughout, the vigilance on safety was unwavering.

During the month, we received the sombre news of the passing away of Dr. Pararajasegaram, a great friend and guide of the Institute almost since inception. Para, as he is fondly called by his friends, helped many in our Institute including me into the public health segment of eye care. He was a frequent visitor, full of wit and always with a smile. He was a formidable presence on the global scene, and the architect of many prevention of blindness programmes. No region of the world was left untouched by his influence. India was one of the largest beneficiaries of his talent. In recognition of his contributions to our public health unit, we have named the education component of GPR ICARE after him. In the demise of Dr.Pararajasegaram, the world of eye care lost a great ophthalmologist, public health champion, scholar, a thorough gentleman, a citizen of the world and above all, a true humanist.

The Standard Chartered-LVPEI Academy continued its hectic activity delivering numerous online teaching programmes and producing high quality education materials. Indeed, this foundation will help us to reach out to thousands more aspiring and practicing eye care professionals and meet their education needs. Kudos to Avinash Pathengey and his team.

Prashant Garg, Komal Agarwal and Vivek Dave have received recognition from different organizations for their contributions. Our warm compliments for these well-deserved accolades.

We wondered how we could reach out and provide services to our rehabilitation clients. But Beula Christy and her team were not deterred. They did every conceivable programme to address the needs of our clients and continue our services. Our compliments to them.

The Rehabilitation team and the teams at our rural centres went beyond the call of duty and provided much needed help to hundreds of families adversely affected by the economic consequences of COVID. They contributed and mobilized funds to ensure that these families received food supplies and other necessities. This spirit of giving and helping made all of us proud. Thanks to each one of them for enhancing our image in this way.

Our cornea fellow from Azerbaijan who completed her fellowship at the end of March could not leave because of all the travel restrictions. Their government was air lifting their citizens from Delhi and they had to get there quickly. Our team organized a vehicle, secured necessary permits from all the states between Hyderabad and Delhi for its passage to get the family to Delhi. This 1600 km journey, which would have been physically and mentally agonizing for them, was made very safe and comfortable by a group of our alumni practicing in various places along the way, providing them utmost care and making sure they reached Delhi on time. This incredible gesture left this family with yet another pleasant memory of India and us feeling very proud of our ambassadors across the country and the world.

- Gullapalli N Rao