



August 2021 at LVPEI

On August 15th India celebrated its 75th Independence Day, and I would like to begin this month's newsletter by paying a tribute to all freedom fighters. On this day in 1947 India got its freedom, ending an almost 200 years of British rule. It is now the turn of the current generation to contribute to nation building and preserve this hard-earned independence. Health is a crucial component of development index. As a responsible health care organisation, we at L V Prasad Eye Institute are committed to make our contribution to good quality and equitable healthcare, working towards eliminating needless blindness and vision impairment.

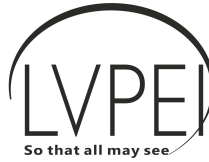
In the month of August, the Standard Chartered LVPEI Academy for eye care education continued the pace of its activity through 20 different continuing education programs attended by over 2000 eye care professionals. One of these programs (Eye HEP) comprised of 5 different components, covering multiple cadres of eye care personnel, demonstrating our commitment to develop adequately trained human resources for eye care.

A novel initiative of the Academy was the introduction of simulation-based training in small incision cataract surgery for ophthalmologists. This program was initiated in collaboration with HelpMeSee, a US based development organisation focussed solely on the alleviation of cataract blindness. Through this collaborative program we will be able to scale up cataract surgery training. Simulation based training programs have already proven their immense value in aviation industry and its adoption in health care will help bridge the wide gap in the demand and supply of skilled human resources. My congratulations to our colleague Jagadesh Reddy for providing leadership to this initiative.

The celebration of the 11th anniversary of our in-house built electronic medical records system 'EyeSmart' was yet another important event this month. Besides LVPEI, this system is currently being used in 42 other locations in 7 countries. So far 7.4 million patients in the LVPEI network and 1.2 million patients in other locations have received consultations using the EyeSmart EMR. Anthony Vipin Das and his team deserve our compliments for developing and implementing this amazing medical record system and I wish the entire team the very best for the next phase of development.

The technology initiatives of our organisation remind me of a beautiful quote- "any organisation with hopes of growing in the future must adopt new tools, platforms and processes to thrive in the ever-changing world of technology", and our team is doing exactly that.

Yet another highlight of the month was Ideation 2021 - a workshop to brainstorm ideas on technology innovation (process/product/design) to enhance the 'Last Mile Eyecare'. This initiative was led by Ramesh Kekunnaya and the team at LVPEI's Centre for Technology Innovation (CFTI). Staff and students from across the LVPEI Pyramid participated in this unique workshop. The key focus of the discussion was optimizing technology to take quality eye care services closer to the doorsteps of the communities. Ideas ranged from products for clinical examination to screening, data management, re-engineered products, accessibility to care etc. At the end of the workshop, 12 innovative technology solutions for the betterment of the 'last mile eyecare' were selected and will be taken up for further development. I would like to thank Ramesh Kekunnaya and the entire team of CFTI for their aspiration of helping the populations with little or no access to healthcare.



Our team at the Institute of Vision Rehabilitation (IVR) continues to bring laurels and putting smiles on the faces of visually challenged individuals. In the month of August, eight visually challenged clients trained in IT services were assisted with job placement. Bharathi and Krishna Priya from our rehabilitation team put together a program for parents of visually impaired clients. Dr Somasekhar Naraganti, a renowned clinical psychologist from the local Rainbow Children's Hospital apprised the participants about the value of family involvement in the care of children with visual impairment associated with other disabilities. In yet another program, teachers from both mainstream and special education system were provided knowledge and skills in handling children with vision disability, and integrating them with other sighted children. Integration of differently abled children and adults in the mainstream society is crucial and such programs will make a huge difference in the lives of visually disabled clients. Thanks to the entire team of IVR for putting in place such programs month after month and facilitating each person to realize his/her full potential.

Through this note I also offer my congratulations to our team members who won various awards in the month of August. Rebecca Sumalini was selected as "Highlighted Early Career Researcher" and is invited to deliver a talk at the upcoming British Congress of Optometry and Vision Science conference 2021. She also received the Edward I. Goodlaw student travel fellowship grant of the American Academy of Optometry. The fellowship is awarded to an optometry student or resident for their work in low vision. Neha Sharma, a PhD student successfully secured the highly prestigious DST Inspire fellowship for her doctoral research. Padmaja Kumari Rani, a consultant ophthalmologist in Smt. Kanuri Santamma Retina Vitreous Service, is appointed as council member of the Asia Pacific Tele ophthalmology Society. Mariya Bashir Doctor, our ophthalmology resident and Vineet Joshi, faculty in the Cornea Institute won first prizes in the free paper sessions of the 6th annual conference of the Telangana Ophthalmology Society. Four among our senior faculty were recognised as world experts and two as experts in their sub-speciality by the 'Expertscape'. Congratulations to all these achievers.

I will end this newsletter with the inspiring story of one of our team members –Neredimalli Gowthami in her own words: "I was in my 9th grade in 2006 when L V Prasad Eye Institute commenced its services in Visakhapatnam from GMR Varalakshmi (GMRV) campus. My father, who was an auto driver, would often praise LVPEI for its great service. A year later, I lost my father and had to discontinue my studies after 12th grade. My mother was working as a house-help in the neighbourhood of Rekha and Anand garu at that time. They encouraged me to join the Vision Technician course offered by LVPEI. It was the turning point in my life, and I will be forever indebted to them for their advice and encouragement. Today, I am working as a Junior Ophthalmic Technician at GMRV campus. The journey so far has been fantastic, and I have grown multi fold - personally and professionally - with the enriching experiences and learning that I had. LVPEI is like my father, whom I lost. If my father were to be alive today, I am sure he would have been very proud of me." Rekha and Anand are our staff members at GMRV campus and I commend their behaviour in motivating and empowering Gowthami, which transformed her life. Such behaviour of our team members make us all proud.

- Prashant Garg