

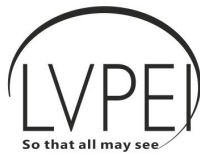
April 2022 at LVPEI

In India, April marks the beginning of a new financial year and the start of summer. This month also marks the beginning of the Telugu and Oriya New Year. “Ugadi”, the Telugu New Year, began on April 2nd while the Oriya new year, “Pana Sankranti”, began on April 14th. This year, after a gap of nearly two years, the people of the Telugu and Oriya states marked these dates with a lot of festivity and enthusiasm. We wish that Ugadi and Pana Sankranti bring the message of good health and happiness to our lives and heralds the end of the pandemic.

LVPEI's Mithu Tulsi Chanrai campus in Bhubaneswar, Odisha inaugurated its own Elderly Eye Care Centre in April. This centre is part of our commitment to provide holistic care to our elderly patients across the LVPEI network. The centre is supported by the ICICI bank and is named, the “ICICI Elderly Eye care Centre”. This new centre is one more dedicated facility for geriatric eye care on our tertiary care centres and the centre of excellence. We are hoping to start a similar dedicated facility at our Kode Venkatadri Chowdary campus, Vijayawada soon. At each of these elderly eye care centres, we perform a risk assessment for falls and other ailments that are common to the elderly but are often under-examined. We then offer advice including physiotherapy and psychosocial wellbeing. These dedicated facilities are going to significantly enhance the quality of care for India's geriatric population. As the average age of our population increases, such services are going to become increasingly important and necessary. I would like to thank the management of ICICI bank for joining us in this activity of high social importance.

We also inaugurated an additional futuristic, technology-enabled vision centre in the Sundargarh District of Odisha. These technology-enabled centres empower vision technicians to gather a lot more clinical information to be used subsequently for tele-consults or machine learning there by enhancing the quality of primary care significantly. The Standard Chartered Bank is partnering with us in creating a network of such futuristic Vision Centres in Odisha. We would like to thank the management of the Bank for joining us in our efforts for taking our enhanced eye care services closer to those who need them.

The Gullapalli Pratibha Rao – International Centre for Advancement of Rural Eyecare (GPR-ICARE) and the School of Medical Sciences, University of Hyderabad announced a diploma course in community eye health in April. The year-long course, spread over two terms, will commence from July this year. It will be a distance and virtual learning program with 10 days of contact classes each term. The course will be open for graduates of medicine, dentistry, AYUSH, optometry, nursing and allied health sciences.



Each month, the Standard Chartered – LVPEI Academy for Eye Care Education conducts several focused training programs. The major highlights this month were the first-of-its-kind, week-long certification course on Optical Coherence Tomography; and a hands-on workshop on Descemet Stripping Endothelial Keratoplasty (DSEK) and Descemet Membrane Endothelial Keratoplasty (DMEK). Both courses were well attended.

April saw several of our faculty members and students receive awards and recognitions. Nag Rao ranked 11th and S Shivaji ranked 12th among the top Indian scientists in the medicine and microbiology categories listed by Research.com. Srikant Sahu received the K R Dutta Best paper award and G S Dash Best Innovation Award during the 34th annual conference of Eastern India Zonal Ophthalmological Congress. Joveeta Joseph was appointed to the Editorial board of BMC Ophthalmology; Vivek Dave was inducted as board member of the International Society of Ocular Trauma; Aditya Kapoor delivered the Dr Kasu Prasad Reddy Oration and Satish Patnaik won the Young Scientist Award at the annual meeting of the Indian Society of Human Genetics. Congratulations to all of them for their accomplishments.

I would like to end this newsletter by sharing nine-year old Fatima's story. Young Fatima presented to our Rajgangpur secondary centre complaining of a sudden loss of vision. She was diagnosed to have cataract in both her eyes as a complication of a systemic condition which needed frequent dialysis. It was a complex case and Fatima would need general anesthesia for surgery. So, she was referred to our Mithu Tulsi Chanrai Campus, Bhubaneswar. A team led by Debasmita Majhi (our pediatric ophthalmology faculty) and Mahasweta Mishra (the anaesthesiologist) evaluated Fatima's condition and discussed the challenges with her parents. Fatima's parents expressed complete faith in the team and consented to the surgery in both her eyes. The procedure was a success! Fatima regained her vision and is now back at school. The relief and joy in Fatima's parents' eyes as they watch Fatima play with her two-year old brother is a sight to behold. The real test of a health system is its ability to deliver care even under such complex clinical circumstances. The team at the MTC campus led by Debasmita and Mahasweta have fortified our patients' faith in our abilities and competence. Fatima's restored vision and her parents' relief are testament to our fundamental motivation: so that all may see.

- Prashant Garg