

## Sankara Nethralaya holds 32<sup>nd</sup> INSTITUTIONAL AWARDS CEREMONY



## Newsweek announces Sankara Nethralaya one of the World's Best Hospitals 2022

Since 1978, Sankara Nethralaya has taken on the challenge of delivering patient-centric eyecare consistently throughout our community care facilities. Even through the worst of the pandemic and beyond, Sankara Nethralaya rose to the task of treating patients with Covid related complications as well complications that arose as patients were not able to access basic eyecare in time. We are happy to be acknowledged as one of the World Best Specialized Hospitals 2022 for the third consecutive year by the Newsweek- Statistica Inc. Survey.

We thank our consultants, staff and paramedical staff for their continued dedication to the vision of this institution and making this international recognition possible.



## Netra Samrakshak Award conferred on Sankara Nethralaya

PRID Rtn Dr. Manoj Desai and DG Rtn. Fazal Mahmood presented Sankara Nethralaya with the Netra Samrakshak (Legendary Institution for community services) award. Dr. Veena Baskaran, Head of Community Services received the award on behalf of our institution and thanked everyone for their support towards this noble cause.

The award was presented at the first ever Rotary National community ophthalmology conference organised by Rotary International District 3190 and Rotary Avoidable Blindness Foundation (Chairman Mr. M. Ravikumar), held in J.N. Tata Auditorium, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru on May 21 -22, 2022.

Sankara Nethralaya family's heartfelt thanks goes to all the ophthalmologists, nurses, and staff who make our mission a reality each day.



## Dr. TSS receives Charaka Award

Dr. T. S. Surendran received the Charaka Award conferred on him by the Rotary Club of Guindy acknowledging his long years of dedicated service in the field of pediatric ophthalmology. Our beloved Chief, Dr. S. S. Badrinath, conveyed his blessings to Dr. T. S. Surendran on this memorable occasion.

The awards ceremony was held at the Hyatt Regency, Teynampet, on 11th May 2022.





## Indian Society of Anaesthesiologists (ISA) honours Dr. Jaichandran V. V.

The Platinum Jubilee Celebration of the Indian Society of Anaesthesiologists (ISA), was held at Chennai on 14-05-2022, ISA National President Dr. Venkatgiri K.M., Vice-President Dr. Anjali Rakesh Bhure, Secretary Dr. Naveen Malthora, and other office bearers honoured our anaesthesiologist Dr. Jaichandran V. V. for his contributions in the field of Ophthalmic Anaesthesia.

Sankara Nethralaya family congratulates Dr. Jaichandran V. V. on this momentous occasion and thanks him for his dedication and enthusiastic contributions made.

**SANKARA NETHRALAYA FAMILY**  
Congratulates  
**Dr. Krishna Kumar S**  
Chief Scientist, Prof., Laboratory Services, Histo Pathology Lab  
on being named as one of the "Top 10 authors with the most publications in retinoblastoma research" in the article "Publication Trends of Research on Retinoblastoma During 2001–2021: A 20-Year Bibliometric Analysis" Journal: Frontiers in Medicine, Ophthalmology.

**TABLE 1 | Top 10 authors with the most publications in retinoblastoma research.**

Author	Country	Affiliation	No. of publications	No. of citations
ABRAMSON DH	USA	Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center	114	5,788
SMELZER DL	USA	Johns Hopkins University	103	3,736
SHENKAR JH	USA	Johns Hopkins University	99	2,849
DUNNELL LI	USA	Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center	96	2,070
FRONTSCHKE M	USA	Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center	49	402
GALLE JE	Canada	University of Toronto	47	1,838
CHANDRAN VV	India	Sankara Nethralaya	43	1,381
CHANDRAN VV	India	Sankara Nethralaya	43	888
RODRIGUEZ-SALAZAR C	USA	St. Jude Children's Research Hospital	42	1,827
WELTON MP	USA	University of Tennessee Health Science Center	42	1,171

## Dr. Krishna Kumar S is one of the "Top 10 authors with the most publications in retinoblastoma research."

Dr. Krishna Kumar S, Deputy Director of Research, Head of Ocular Pathology Department is named as one of the "Top 10 authors with the most publications in retinoblastoma research" in the article "Publication Trends of Research on Retinoblastoma During 2001–2021: A 20-Year Bibliometric Analysis"

The article appears in the Journal: Frontiers in Medicine, Ophthalmology.

## Sankara Nethralaya holds 32<sup>nd</sup> Institutional Awards Ceremony

The 32nd Institutional Awards Ceremony was held on Saturday, 05th March, 2022 in V.D. Swami Auditorium. After more than 2 years, parents and families of the students were able to attend the Institutional Awards ceremony and the V D. Auditorium was packed to its full capacity.

The ceremony began with the procession led by Dr. Anuradha, Principal, Dr. Rashima A., HOD- Occupational Optometry Services, and Assistant Professor (ESO), Dr. S. Vishwanathan, HOD- Optometry and Optical Services, Elite School of Optometry, Dr. Anand A. R., Senior Associate Professor and In-charge – Microbiology, Sri Nathella Sampathu Chetty Clinical Laboratory Services, Dr. Ronnie George, President & Director - Research, Director of Glaucoma Services, Dr. Smita Praveen, Director of Academics, Professor Lieutenant – Colonel Dr. Arunachalam Ravikumar, Pro-Vice- Chancellor, Medical & Health Sciences, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Dr. T. S. Surendran, Vice Chairman & Director Pediatric Ophthalmology, Dr. Girish S. Rao, President, and Dr. N. Angayarkanni, Director, Laboratory Services. The Ph. D guides joining these distinguished members of the medical fraternity on the stage were Dr. S. Krishna Kumar, Chief Scientist & Professor, Histopathology Lab, Dr. Umashankar, Dr. K. Koraila Kurian, Dr. Sailaja Elchuri, Senior Principal Scientist / Associate Professor Nanotechnology Lab, and Dr. Jyotirmay Biswas, Director of Uvea Services.



Mr. Durairaj, Ph. D Scholar, rendered the invocation song. Dr. N. Angayarkanni welcomed the gathering with an encouraging speech to the students graduating this year. She paid her respects to Dr. S. S. Badrinath, and Dr. (Mrs.) Vasanthi Badrinath. She welcomed Dr. Girish S. Rao and thanked him for enabling ceremony to move to the real world from the virtual. Dr. Angayarkanni extended a warm welcome to Dr. T. S. Surendran, the honorable Chief Guest, Dr. Arunachalam Ravikumar, and all the academicians and the Ph.D guides to the awards ceremony.

Dr. Anuradha, Principal – ESO, presented the academic report for the period July 2020-June 2021. The first batch of Post graduates and 27 undergraduates of Elite School of Optometry in collaboration with SASTRA deemed university are the 32nd batch passing out of ESO. All of them have found career placements. Post graduate students, Ms. Mehal and Ms. Jannet won the award for best paper presentation and best case report in the India Vision Institute conference. Dr. Rashima received Best Case Report award from the Optometry Council of India, and Dr. Anuradha N. received the Outstanding Contributions to the Public Health award from the Optometry Council of India. ESO published three science indexed publications in the fields of community ophthalmology, occupational optometry, and Contact Lens. The ESO staff, students, and educators collaborated in conducting over 10 eye screening camps in rural areas. Dr. Anuradha N. went on to report various activities carried out by ESO in spite of the difficulties faced over the past couple of years.

Then, Dr. Rashima, introduced the Chief Guest, Professor Lt Col Arunachalam Ravikumar MS, Dip NB, DLORCS (England), FRCS (Glasgow), FAMS, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Medical & Health Sciences, SRM Institute of Science and Technology. Dr. Rashima concised his impressive 40-page long resume into a two-minute introductory speech.

Dr. Girish S. Rao, President presented the Chief Guest with a welcome gift. Prof Lt Col Arunachalam Ravikumar took the podium to thank everyone for the honour of addressing the gathering, and he specially thanked the Board of Trustees, Dr. Anuradha N. and Dr. T. S. Surendran. Prof. Arunachalam reminded the students that they were fortunate to study during this time of technological advancements that gave them an advantage in treating their patients. He reminisced about his early years of medical practice and the advances made in ophthalmology over the years. He applauded Sankara Nethralaya for bringing the retinal implant to Indians without any disparity. He encouraged the outgoing students to treat the patient holistically and keep their welfare at the forefront. Professor Lt Col Arunachalam Ravikumar concluded his address by thanking everyone once again.



Thereafter, Dr. A. R. Anand, presented the academic activities of the Vidyasagar Institute of Biomedical Technology and Sciences (VIBS) during the period July 2020 and June 2021. VIBS was established in 2006 for the promotion of biomedical sciences and biomedical technologies with a generous donation by the Late Padma Shri Iravadam Mahadevan in memory of his son, the Late Shri Vidyasagar. This academic year, VIBS had 5 Ph.D. Degree Awardees, 4 under the SASTRA (deemed to be University), Thanjavur and one under Anna University, Chennai. Of these, 3 of the candidates were present to receive the award and two were given in absentia. In the past two decades, Sankara Nethralaya had produced 72 PhDs in basic sciences who are shining in all corners of the world. VIBS boasts of 595 publications in basic medical sciences in the last 2 decades. The awards were distributed by Dr. Girish S. Rao and the Chief Guest to the ecstatic students. Dr. A. R. Anand concluded this part of the ceremony by wishing the new PH.Ds for their bright future.

The undergraduates of the Elite School of Optometry rendered took the Optometry Oath led by Dr. Viswanathan S., HOD- Optometry services. and Assistant Professor, ESO. Dr. Anuradha N. then invited Prof. Arunachalam to present the newly minted passed graduates with their Master's degree certificates. Ms. Karthiga, M.Optom, delivered a moving and stirring valedictory speech on behalf of the post graduate class, while Ms. Vinodhini delivered the valedictory speech on behalf of the undergraduates.

Dr. Anuradha N. then announced the ESO endowment awards, which were presented by Prof Arunachalam, Dr. T. S. Surendran, and Dr. Rashima.

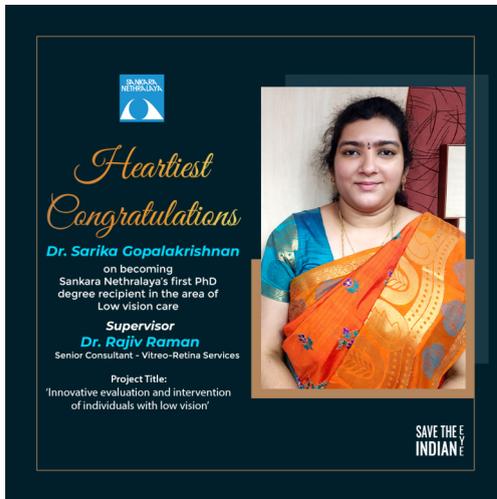
Dr. Smita Praveen, Director of Academics, presented the Institutional Awards. Dr. Sheila John, PhD, HoD – Teleophthalmology, was also honored on stage by her guide, Dr. Jyotirmay Biswas. The institutional awards were handed out by Dr. Girish S. Rao, Dr. T. S. Surendran, Dr. Ronnie George and Prof. Arunachalam.

The ceremony concluded with Dr. Vishwanathan's vote of thanks. He extolled the outgoing students and awardees to remember and uphold the values of their alma mater. He also thanked the staff and students for making the event a grand success.

## Dr. Sarika Gopalakrishnan: SN first PhD degree recipient in ‘Low vision care’

Ms. Sarika, senior optometrist, Low Vision Care department, helps patients with low vision by providing appropriate devices and enhanced training to improve their quality of vision to make them function independently, while performing their day-to-day activities. She enrolled for her PhD degree with SASTRA University, Thanjavur in 2016 and worked under the guidance of Dr. Rajiv Raman, senior ophthalmologist, Department of Vitreoretinal services, Sankara Nethralaya.

Her PhD work was on virtual reality technology to measure the visual performance of patients with low vision and augmented reality technology for intervention of patients with low vision. She completed her PhD Open viva voce titled ‘Innovative evaluation and intervention of individuals with low vision’ on 8th Mar 2022 in the presence of external examiner Dr. Suraj Senjam from R.P. Centre for Ophthalmic Sciences, AIIMS, Delhi. She was officially declared as ‘Doctorate in Philosophy’ by the SASTRA University on the same day. She has many peer-reviewed publications from her PhD work.



## Lion S. N. Harinarayanan receives Service Above Self Award from the Tamil Nadu Ophthalmic Association

One of Sankara Nethralaya’s most steadfast supporters and well-wishers, Lion S. N. Harinarayanan has devoted his life to making the lives of the less fortunate better. He received the Service Above Self Award by the Tamilnadu Ophthalmic Association on 20th March, 2022, instituted by the Tamil Nadu Ophthalmic Association.

Lion S. N. Harinarayanan had joined Lions Club of Central Madras in 1986, with the sole objective of serving the community and reaching out to as many people as possible.

In 1998, under his leadership, the Lions Club of Central Madras had championed the cause of fighting blindness. Having started with a LCIF Grant for upgrading the facilities of the Community wing at Sankara Nethralaya and to increase the number of free Cataract surgeries performed under the ‘Reach Out program’. He was instrumental in the project and in increasing the number of surgeries being performed from 4,500 to 10,000 over a period of 24 months.

Lion S. N. Harinarayanan’s resolve to dedicate his life in fighting blindness was cemented, when he witnessed the impact the community services project had on the patients.



Lions Club of Central Madras along with Lion S. N. Harinarayanan had worked with Sankara Nethralaya in playing a vital role by facilitating funds and helping in upgrading of the equipments.

He was responsible for organizing eye screening camps in the economically weaker neighborhoods of Chennai and the neighboring villages. He was instrumental in identifying people with vision problems, bringing them to the base hospital for a comprehensive examination, arranging the required treatment, and facilitating their return journey. This end-to-end eye care approach has evolved into the complete community care services rendered by the Sankara Nethralaya Jaslok Community Ophthalmic Center.

Till date, Lion S. N. Harinarayanan and Lions Club of Central Madras has been responsible for organizing over 800 camps, facilitating 12,500 cataract surgeries and more than 1,500 other eye surgeries.

In 2003, his passion and dedication to Sight First got him involved in a three-year project of Lion's Club of Central Madras for Screening & Treating of Diabetic Retinopathy.

Again, a LCIF Funded Project spread over the areas of Chennai, Tiruvallur, Kanchipuram, Villuppuram and Tiruvannamalai, had created awareness about Diabetic Retinopathy, and facilitated screening camps for detection and treatment to avoid further loss of vision. The scope of the project was extended to a training program for ophthalmologists working in Lions Eye Hospitals across India for screening and treating diabetic retinopathy.

Lion S. N. Harinarayanan's contribution in the fight against preventable blindness has been recognized by many and his accolades include the Friend of Humanity' Award from the Lions Clubs International Foundation in 2008-2009; 'Helping Hands' Award from the Lions Clubs International Foundation in 2009-2010, and many International President's appreciation certificates, multiple and district certificates

Sankara Nethralaya has also awarded this dedicated and selfless philanthropist for propagating the need and necessity for eye donation and also for motivating many to donate their Cornea at the time of death.

Sankara Nethralaya salutes Lion S. N. Harinarayanan, a true champion in the fight against preventable blindness in our community for Service Above Self.

## **Raising Awareness during World Retinoblastoma Week**

World Retinoblastoma Awareness Week was observed by the Retinoblastoma team at Sankara Nethralaya between May 8th and May 14th 2022. From arranging a press meet to setting up a white board at the entrance to the MAHYCO block for the young retinoblastoma survivors to place their hand – stamps. The Retinoblastoma team poured their hearts and souls into highlighting this curable childhood cancer, its prevention, and cure, and to spread awareness about this disease to the general public. Over 150 children with childhood eye cancers are treated by Sankara Nethralaya each year – one of the highest treatment rates in the world. This institution is also one of the few eye care facilities in India to specialise in childhood eye cancer (Retinoblastoma). Sankara Nethralaya offers cost-free treatment to the children from disadvantaged backgrounds and does not discriminate on the treatment.

Dr Charanya C, Associate Consultant, Viteoretinal services gave a short introduction, titled "Retinoblastoma - an eye opener," focusing on the fact that fighting Retinoblastoma in children is a team effort. She explained that familial or heredity contributed to several cases, in which instance, the disease can even be prevented in the womb.

The press meet included a panel of doctors who are involved in treating children with childhood eye cancer, alongside Sankara Nethralaya's well-experienced retinoblastoma specialists to field the questions from the press.



The panel included Dr Veena Noronha, Senior Radiologist; V. R. R Scans; Dr. K. Satish Srinivas and Dr. Christopher John, Radiation Oncology, Ramachandra Medical Centre, Dr Pritam Chatterjee, and Dr. (Prof) S. Krishna Kumar, Chief Scientist, Laboratory Services - Histo Pathology Lab, among others. Dr. Lingam Gopal, Distinguished Senior Consultant and Dr. G. Suganeswari, Senior Consultant, Department of Vitreo Retinal Services were present to moderate and field questions from the press.

The panel of doctors stressed the fact that this disease was not just managed by a single ocular oncologist but many people such as a paediatrician, paediatric oncologist, an anaesthetist, a radiologist, an intervention radiologist. The priority for the Retinoblastoma team at Sankara Nethralaya is to first try and save the life of the children, the second priority is to save the eye and thirdly, save the vision, if possible.

Dr. G. Suganeswari, Senior Consultant, Vitreoretina and Oncology Services, said, “Retinoblastoma is a curable childhood cancer and it is a very common cancer in the childhood period. In India, every year, 2000 children are born with the disease, which means one in eighteen thousand children are born with a retinoblastoma and these children belong to the lower social economic strata.”

The parents find it difficult to afford the expensive and prolonged treatment. The Retinoblastoma team helps these children with the most advanced treatment for different stages of retinoblastoma, from intraocular tumours, to tumours which have already spread away from the eye (extraocular tumours), and tumours which have already spread to the organs- distant metastasis.

A few of the patients and their guardians were also present to tell their stories and contribute towards raising awareness about the disease. Two of the patients had familial retinoblastoma, while the cause of the disease was unknown (sporadic) for one patient. The families of the child survivors were very appreciative of the chance to speak about this disease and how their children were lucky to be treated cost-free as even the middle class families cannot afford the cost of lengthy treatments.

Dr. G. Suganeswari reiterated that the patients she had treated were all bright and had great futures – with the support of their families these cancer survivors could go on to achieve greater things. She also cautioned everyone present that the survivors of childhood eye cancer had to come back for regular follow-ups as they had a chance of developing other cancers later in life.

Sankara Nethralaya is one of the few hospitals where the chemotherapy is an in-house facility to make it easier for the patients to get all treatments under one single roof. Housing a chemotherapy ward involves a lot of commitment from many people and requires collaboration with other fraternity hospitals to manage the child patients.

The gathering was reassured that there were many NGOs and charities who are coming forward to help these child patients get cost-free life and vision saving treatment. The press meet closed on a positive note with the doctors assuring everyone that it was possible to save the life of every child, if timely treatment was given.



## Lifting Off with Shri Taraprasad Das

Dr. Taraprasad Das, distinguished ophthalmologist, specializing in vitreoretinal diseases gave one of his rare and enlightened talks in Sri VD Swami Auditorium, on March 18th, 2022. He is the former Vice-Chairman of the L. V. Prasad Eye Institute. He had worked for 10 years in Aravind Eye Hospital and 31 years in LVPEI and is the ex-director of LV Prasad Eye Institute, Bhubaneswar. Dr. Rajiv Raman, Senior Consultant, Department of Vitreoretinal services, opened the event with a brief introduction of Dr. Taraprasad Das' numerous accomplishments and achievements during his four decade long career in eye care.

Dr. Taraprasad Das has completed many papers in the diabetic retinopathy sub-specialty, delivered 13 named lectures, has received many awards from state, national societies and international organizations. He was the longest serving Regional Chairman of International Agency for Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) Southeast Asia from 2012 – 2020. He was awarded the Padma Shri – the highest civilian honor – by Government of India, in 2013. Dr. Rajiv Raman reminisced that when Dr. Taraprasad Das had visited Sankara Nethralaya, Dr. S. S. Badrinath took Dr. Taraprasad around the hospital and our distinguished guest had observed that Sankara Nethralaya was indeed a temple. He then invited Dr. Taraprasad Das on stage to introduce the theme of "Lift Off" to the eagerly waiting audience.

Dr. Taraprasad Das reminisced about his early days in Madras where he met many of Sankara Nethralaya's senior consultants such as Dr. Surendran, Dr. Lingam Gopal, Dr. Muna and Dr. Pramod Bhende. He spoke about his early days in Boston and thinking about how to 'lift off' – a terminology from aviation. He took his life lessons from mentors who influenced his decisions and helped him lift off.

He drew life lessons from his extensive experiences with the many wonderful people he met throughout his 41 years as an ophthalmologist and gained much experience through his work with national and international government collaborations.

He explained the importance of public speaking, expressing oneself in a clear manner, and touched on personal growth, while simultaneously making time for family – an important factor in becoming a well-rounded person. He touched on the necessity to identify areas, in which we should aim to achieve – whether monetarily, research, or work. He explained that by examining one's mistakes, we could grow professionally and personally. He urged the young audience members to be committed not just compliant and reminded them to do for each patient what they would do for their relatives.

You can listen to Dr. Taraprasad Das' talk here: <https://youtu.be/BN1nNV8KaA>

## Seeing through the ‘Eyes of the blind’

It’s practically impossible to imagine how a blind person struggles in day to day life. We can have a glimpse of it if we close our eyes for 10 seconds and feel the experience. Way back in 2000, our beloved Chief Dr. S.S. Badrinath conceived this idea of curing preventable blindness in a way no one could have ever thought of. There is a considerable poor population in our country who don’t have any accessibility to health care facilities especially eye care. Their poor eyesight makes them completely dependent on others for their survival, and they have to compromise on their self-esteem day in and day out. He thought of an idea in reaching out to these people at their doorstep and giving them an independent life.

It took almost 12 years for implementing this herculean task in collaboration with IIT Madras and that’s how the Mobile Eye Surgical Unit (MESU) was born. There have been lots of ups and downs in its journey, and one of the biggest challenge was acceptance by the society. As any new idea takes a lot of time and effort to harmonize itself with the society, so did MESU.

It was February 2015. when I became a part of this project and would like to share my experience here. Many people used to ask me why can’t we screen the patients and bring them to the base hospital for surgeries like other hospitals do. So actually what is the main purpose of MESU? Let me tell you that for any patient who goes to the base hospital post screening, there is a minimum stay of 3 days and the hassle of commuting. Patients who are daily wage workers suffer financial loss also. Also, there should be someone to accompany them. This discourages a lot of patients and they postpone the surgery to a later date specially handicap patients, elderly, daily wage workers and women, which complicates their condition even more. Here in MESU, post screening they come next day morning for surgery and within 2 hours they are back home. Most importantly, all the patients are operated by senior consultants and not trainees, so the chances of complications are almost nil. Not only that, we examine the patients post operatively at the camp site itself the very next day and a week later also and free glasses are dispensed to them after a month. All the services are provided right at their doorstep totally free of cost. So patients find this setup very convenient and encourage others to come for surgery at MESU. Till date, we have operated 12216 eyes including both in Chennai and Jharkhand units and out of these almost 20 percent of patients were handicap and nearly 70 percent elderly. Patients wait for us to come to the same venue for the second eye surgery and avoid going elsewhere. We do face challenges at various fronts, but it gives immense solace and satisfaction, when we see someone living an independent life.

I feel service is not only through your wallets, but you have to give a part of yourself also. I would like to conclude with the famous words of American President John F. Kennedy “ASK NOT WHAT GOD CAN DO FOR YOU. ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR GOD”.

DR GAJENDRA KUMAR VERMA



## **Sankara Nethralaya welcomes Ms. Danielle Hormillosa, Global Grants Specialist of Lion's Club International**

Ms. Danielle Hormillosa, MPH, Global Grants Specialist, Global Grants Department, Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF), visited Sankara Nethralaya on Monday, 6th June 2022. For over two decades, Sankara Nethralaya and Lion's Club International Foundation have collaborated through the SightFirst grants in the fight against avoidable blindness.

Through these grants, Sankara Nethralaya has offered free cataract surgeries, diabetic retinopathy (DR), and even trained ophthalmologists from Lions' Eye Hospital. Ms. Danielle Hormillosa was welcomed by Lion. R. Sampath, International Director, Lion N. S. Sankar, Past International Director, Lion. S. V. Manikam, Dist. Governor 324M, Lion. Mohammed Naveen, First Vice Dist. Governor, Lion. M. Sridhar, Second Vice Dist. Governor, Lion. N. Varadarajan, Second Vice Dist. Governor (Elect), and Members of Lions Club of Central Madras, Dist 324M.

Dr. Girish Shiva Rao, Chairman, Dr. T. S. Surendran, Vice- Chairman and Director of Paediatric Ophthalmology, Dr. Rajesh S, Senior Consultant, Incharge C. U. Shah Sankara Nethralaya & MESU, and Dr. Rajiv Raman, Senior Consultant Shri Bhagwan Mahavir Vitreoretinal Services were also present to introduce Sankara Nethralaya and our community activities.

Mr. Suresh Kumar P., General Manager, Operations, gave the welcome address followed by a brief introduction by Past District Governor, Lion G. V. Raman about the partnership between Lions Club of Central Madras and Sankara Nethralaya since 1998. Dr. T. S. Surendran, Vice Chairman and Director of Pediatric Ophthalmology, spoke about Sankara Nethralaya's journey over four decades and our various community initiatives, including Mobile Eye Surgical Unit (MESU).

Dr. Rajesh P. S., Senior Consultant, Incharge- CUSSN & MESU, elaborated on the SightFirt grant, which enabled SN to provide 10,000 cost free cataract surgeries per annum utilizing the MESU. Dr. Rajiv Raman, Senior Consultant, Dept. of Vitreo Retinal Services presented a detailed report of the LCIF -SN Dream project funded by LCIF and spoke about the usefulness and impact of the project on creating Awareness on Diabetic Retinopathy and its treatment. He also touched on the research project on the compliance of the Diabetic Retinopathy patients for subsequent follow-up and treatment.

Thereafter, Dr. Rajiv Raman invited questions from Ms. Hormillosa and the assembled Lions members. The Grants Specialist asked insightful questions regarding the DR project and requested that any research papers be sent to the HQ after publication.

Dr. G. Suganeswari, Senior Consultant, Vitreoretinal and Oncology Services presented the Project on Diabetic Retinopathy Skill Transfer Training Program, funded by LCIF. Twenty four ophthalmologists from Lions Eye Hospitals from various parts of India entered the two-month training program. The project was different as it focussed on practising ophthalmologists rather than younger doctors, with not many takers as the program required them to be at SN for two months. Lion S. N. Harinarayanan, Project Coordinator was instrumental in recruiting the participants for the program.

The short meeting drew to a close with this report.

## Sankara Nethralaya Felicitates Our Nurses on International Nurses Day



On 12th May 2022, the V. D. Auditorium in KNBIRVO Block was filled with a celebratory atmosphere. International Nurses Day is celebrated around the world on the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth – May 12th. The theme for the 2022 resource is Nurses: A Voice to Lead - Invest in Nursing and respect rights to secure global health.

The Chief Guest Dr. Girish S. Rao, President, unveiled the Book of Ophthalmic Nursing – a labour of love by SN's Nursing Department. Several competitions and quizzes were organized for International Nurses' Day and World Hand Hygiene Day. The winners of these competitions were announced and the prizes distributed amidst a festive atmosphere. A day for SN's hardworking nurses to step back from their busy workday and be acknowledged for their resilience and courage.

## Dr. Monisha Dilip Hawaii, USA honoured consultants, staff of JCOC, and MESU team for their services the during Pandemic on 21 Apr 2022



## Press Meet on Creating India - Centric Evidence Diabetic Retinopathy Screening and Management held from 19th to 20th March 2022.



## International Women's Day Celebration at SN Main on 08 March 2022



### Help a Poor Person Regain His Sight

Dear Well-wisher

Greetings from Sankara Nethralaya,

I hope this issue of Eyclights India finds you in good health. The past 6 months have been fulfilling for Sankara Nethralaya's community services as we are reaching out to more and more deserving patients who had been unserved due to the pandemic. We are grateful for supporters such as yourself who extended a helping hand even in the toughest times.

Childhood blindness is a major public health concern in India. A recent review from AIIMS estimates the prevalence of childhood blindness in India as 1 child per thousand with anywhere from 2 to 13 children per thousand suffering from visual impairments. We passionately believe that all children deserve to have the gift of sight and access to the best possible children's ophthalmic services regardless of socio-economic backgrounds.

Our Department of Paediatric Ophthalmology is a pioneer in treating eye issues in the delicate age groups of neonates to teens. The paediatric ophthalmology department performs delicate and complicated surgeries including squint correction (strabismus), paediatric cataracts, paediatric glaucoma, and traumatic cataracts, etc., for which multiple surgeries are required. Unlike cataracts or other eye related problems in adults, children require follow-up surgeries, and frequent follow-ups.

The average cost of a paediatric ophthalmic surgery is minimum Rs. 25,000/- and it varies according to the type of procedure a child needs with the number of follow-ups based on the individual needs of the child patient. As the parents quickly run out of resources and are left helpless since the cost of additional procedures proves too much to bear, we frequently step in and offer cost-free surgeries and follow-up care to the children in need.

In last 5 years alone, the department of Paediatric Ophthalmology has performed over 9000 cost-free paediatric surgeries, providing free follow-up care as well. Between 2017 and 2022, 3556 Retina-Vitro-Retinal surgeries were performed on child patients from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

With your support, we can give these needy children the ability to be valuable citizens and become independent adults.

You can help save a child's vision by contributing Rs. 25, 000/- for a paediatric ophthalmic procedure. Each child who comes to us deserves to have their vision saved and your support towards paediatric eye surgeries will go a long way in helping indigent children to regain their vision.

Donations to Medical Research Foundation are exempt under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act. Cheque / DD can be drawn in favour of "Medical Research Foundation."

With Warm Regards and Best Wishes

**Dr. Girish S. Rao**

President

## Shri S. V. Acharya Honoured with A. Shama Rao Outstanding Achiever's Award – 2022



Shri S. V. Acharya, President Emeritus, SNUSA was honoured with the A Shama Rao Memorial Outstanding Achievers Award 2022 on Friday May 27 at the Srinivas University Mukka campus.

On receiving this high recognition for his socially responsible community activities, Shri S. V. Acharya said, “Three things should have more emphasis in life. Time, help and wealth. Give time for yourself and help who are yours when they need, earn and use your wealth to communicate on a large scale.”

The Vice President of A Shama Rao Foundation and Pro Chancellor of Srinivas University, Dr. A. Srinivas Rao, was the chief guest at this momentous occasion. In his address to the gathering, he appreciated Shri Acharya, saying, “Mr. Acharya works in the financial field, but is doing social work in the USA through Sankara Nethralaya. His service is always commendable.”

Dr. C. A. A. Raghavendra Rao, Chancellor of Srinivas University and President of A Shama Rao Foundation, led the awards presentation ceremony.

Shri S. V. Acharya's wife, Smt. Nirmala Acharya, accompanied by their son and daughter-in-law, Shri Acharya's sister and husband were also present on this joyous occasion.

## Sankara Nethralaya Deeply Mourns Smt. Kausalya Appukutty



Smt. Kausalya Appukutty (85 y.o.), SWAN (SN Women's Auxillary wing) trustee attained her heavenly abode on 19-06-2022. She is survived by one son and two daughters. She was the wife of Dr. V. G. Appukutty, after whom the Dr. V. G. Appukutty campus, Guindy, Chennai is named. Smt. Kausalya was also the proud recipient of the Smt MS Subbulakshmi award (presented by Former Governor (Late) K Rosaiah) for her dedication and passion towards social work.

Dr. V. G. Appukutty was one of Dr. S. S. Badrinath's the strongest supporters in helping indigent blind patients since the very beginning. The humanitarian couple were actively involved in the growth and development of our community services. Smt. Kausalya Appukutty and the children had donated the Dr. V. G. Appukutty campus in Guindy in memory of their late father.

Smt. Kausalya was one of the instrumental figures in establishing SWAN in 1984. Her guidance and vision in the early years of SWAN helped to strengthen and broaden the vision of SWAN. She had also volunteered at the MRD filing records/papers meticulously and neatly. Her dedication and punctuality were well known to the SN Staff and her co-volunteers.

Sankara Nethralaya family will remember her energy and dedication to the welfare of the deserving patients who came through our portals. She was also dedicated to the cause of eye donation and had pledged her eyes.

Dr. S. S. Badrinath, Mrs. Vasanthi Badrinath, and Sankara Nethralaya family will remember her guidance throughout SWAN's formative years and more. We pray to the Almighty for the pious soul to attain Mukthi. Our prayers and offerings for Srimati Kausalya Appukutty will always endure.

We are grateful to the family of Smt. Kausalya for donating their mother's eyes to Sankara Nethralaya.

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Rs 10,00,000

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#### For more details, contact

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