

A Report

2020

Webinar on Primary Eye Care in Pandemic Conditions Challenges and Opportunities

VISION 2020 INDIA
Knowledge Hub
Presents



Primary Eye Care in Pandemic Conditions Challenges and Opportunities

Date: 02 September 2020 | Time: 1500 – 1600 hrs

CONTEXT: The pandemic has adversely affected the functioning of primary eye care centres across the country. Being an essential component of eye care service delivery, a disruption in its functioning can result in far reaching impact on eye health.

Objective of Webinar: to review the modified examination protocols to provide safe eye care and also to highlight the opportunities and challenges during the pandemic. The webinar will predominantly focus on strategies adopted by L V Prasad Eye Institute across its primary eye care network which may be modified and used as appropriate.

Resource Person

Dr Srinivas Marmamula

Associate Director, Public Health Research & Training (GPR ICARE), LVPEI



Dr Srinivas Marmamula's trained for optometry at L V Prasad Eye Institute. He holds a Masters from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London and did his Ph.D. School of Optometry and Vision Science, UNSW, Sydney. His post-doctoral research fellowship in 2012-2013 with Dr David Friedman at Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University, USA.

Dr Srinivas Marmamula has been part of several Studies and is currently the principal investigator for 'The Hyderabad Ocular Morbidity in Elderly Study (HOMES)' (2017-2020). He is also teaching faculty at Brien Holden School of Optometry and Vision Science. His areas of interest are, epidemiology of visual impairment, uncorrected refractive errors, presbyopia, eye health in elderly and other vulnerable populations and training personnel for community eye care.

Learning and Outcome

- Modified protocols for primary eye care
- Opportunities and challenges in providing primary eye care during this pandemic

For Whom

This programme is mainly intended for the Trustees, Directors, Administrators, Operations team, Managers of the hospital. However, all interested staff can also participate.



VISION 2020: The Right to Sight INDIA
D-21, Corporate Park, 2nd floor,
Near Dwarka Sector-8 Metro Station,
Dwarka Sector- 21, New Delhi- 110077

Introduction:

Primary Eye Care is an essential component of eye care service delivery. The pandemic has adversely affected the functioning of the primary eye care centres across the country. The examination protocols and infrastructure facilities are modified to ensure safe eye care for the patients and also the safety of the examiners

Objective of the webinar:

The objective of this webinar was to review the modified examination protocols to provide safe eye care and also to highlight the opportunities and challenges during the pandemic.

The lecture predominantly focused on strategies adopted by L V Prasad Eye Institute across its primary eye care network which may be modified and used as appropriate.

Participation:

Total numbers of participants were 157. This programme was mainly intended for the Trustees, Directors, Administrators, Operations team, Managers of the hospital and all interested staff.

Resource person

Dr. Srinivas Marmamula, Associate Director – Public Health, L V Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad, India

Programme:

The session started with a welcome address by **Mr Phanindra Babu Nukella**, CEO, and VISION 2020 INDIA. He also set the objectives of the webinar and introduced **Dr. Srinivas Marmamula**, the resource person.

Further, Dr. Srinivas Marmamula, started the session with his first topic that was pandemic and eye care, in which he described Vision centres and its functions. He informed that as on date there are 188 vision centres and 9 centres in process in LV Prasad eye institute. He gave an insight on strategies implemented by them during the lockdown period. For instance, 12859 phone calls were made out of which 29280 people needed eye care, teaching and learning of staff continued online,

protocols and workflows were modified and training sessions on revised protocols were given. They adapted the five P formula for COVID-19:-

1. Protect ourselves
2. Protect our families
3. Protect our patients
4. Protect our colleagues
5. Protect our community

LV Prasad later came up with the guidelines on “primary eye care protocol – post COVID -19” that includes procurement of supplies, preparation of vision centres, dress code and Personal Protective Equipments (PPE), disinfection protocol for equipment and the VC facility, Clinical Examination protocol, spectacle Dispensing protocol and Monitoring protocols.

He explained the method of eye examination during COVID-19

1. Demography and History taking
 - Questions on the recent history of fever, cold, cough and breathing problems in the last two weeks to the patients and also family members.
 - Aadhar card number/mobile number (of self or next of kin) are mandatory to facilitate tracing , f required
2. Visual acuity assessment for distance.
 - L-Occluder should not be used.
 - Pinhole visual acuity is not required
 - Maintain at least one meter distance from the patient while assessing visual acuity.
3. Near Vision assessment.
 - Examiner should hold the near vision chart at a distance of 35-40 cm instead of giving it to patient to hold it.
 - At least one meter distance from the patient should be maintained while assessing near vision also.
 - Examiner should “stand up” to do the procedure s that he/she is at a higher level compared to that of the patient.
4. Objective and Subjective refraction.
 - The trial frame is cleaned with an alcohol wipe before placing it on the patient for refraction.
 - Touching the forehead of the patient to measure working distance should be avoided.
 - All the lenses used in neutralization should be kept separately.
 - Replaced in the trial box only after cleaning each lens and occluder

He presented a video on “Making a Breath Shield for Retinoscope”

5. Slit – lamp examination

- Slit lamp installed with transparent barrier to prevent exposure.
- Avoid touching the eye of the patients during the examination.
- Headrest, chin rest and the handles should be cleaned with alcohol wipes after every patient

6. Applanation tonometry

- Patients aged 30 years of age
- No h/o redness in the last 2-3 weeks

7. Direct Ophthalmoscopy

- Direct ophthalmoscopy is avoided on all patients until further notice.

8. Fundus cameras

- A breath barrier installed.

He gave an insight about the Spectacle dispensing guidelines, explained the prescribing and dispensing protocols.

He emphasized on the opportunities and challenges during COVID-19 pandemic. Also gave a brief on the guidelines for eye examination, home based eye care for the elderly – the “*silver sight*” initiative.

The strategy to “reaching out” to stakeholders:-

1. Phone calls

- Patients- Annual recall (over 100000 calls)
- Referral follow-up
- Mapping patient’s residence with nearest eye care centre and eye examination

2. Local networking

- Local health personnel (ASHA/ANM)
- Village volunteers
- Others

The strategy to “reaching out” to local teams:-

- Regular zoom sessions
- Clear “End to End” communication at regular intervals
- Support structure for quick and evidence based decision making regarding health issues.
- “Physician on call” for all the staff members
- Assurance that “no one will lose their jobs” nor have “salary cuts”.
- Institutional support for those who may turn “positive”
- Liaison with Specialty Hospitals in case any team members needs it.

Their vision centres monitoring framework was also changed in the COVID-19 times that also includes remote monitoring.

In the end he concluded with explaining after-effects of COVID-19 and way forward strategies.

Subsequent to his presentation, delegates asked their questions which were answered by **Dr. Srinivas Marmamula**.

Dr Phanindra Babu Nukella wrapped up the webinar with vote of thanks.

Webinar recording:

The entire webinar was recorded. Below is the link given into the email to download the entire recording of the webinar :

<https://vimeo.com/461310766/40272221f8>

Gratitude:

- *VISION 2020 INDIA is sincerely thankful to Dr. Srinivas Marmamula, Associate Director - Public Health, L V Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad, India for his valuable time and kind support for the cause.*
- *Sincere thanks to L V Prasad Eye Institute, and Cybersight / Orbis India team. Mr Gangadhar from Cybersight, Australia for their support in conducting the webinar through Cybersight platform.*
- *Our sincere thanks to all the delegates, participated in the webinar and thanks for their encouraging response.*
- *We are extremely thankful to each and every one who supported us to make this webinar a grand success.*