

WORLD CLASS EYE CARE WITH A SOCIAL IMPACT

Background:

Blindness is recognized as a public health problem worldwide affecting populations across socioeconomic boundaries. India has the largest number of irreversibly blind in the world. Every 5 seconds a person in our world goes blind and a child goes blind every minute. Blinding conditions increase child mortality - 50 per cent of children who become blind die within two years. Further 90 % of children who are blind don't go to school.

At Sankara we are passionate about eye care and we are motivated by the constant awareness that millions of visually handicapped people are seeking a lifeline. We live it, breathe it, sleep it and build future plans for it.

Objectives of the Organization:

- Compassionate High Quality Care – State of the art medical methods delivered to poor.
- Comprehensive Eye Care Services preventive, curative and rehabilitative care.
- Develop a qualified and passionate workforce to serve the needs of the community.
- Create awareness related to various preventable and curable eye disorders
- Financial Self Sufficiency – Every new hospital to be self-sufficient in 5 years or less

States Covered:

Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Maharashtra, Number of revenue districts covered: 146 (69 Districts under active coverage)

Service Delivery:

- Population within 300 km distance of each hospital. Targeted beneficiaries provided comprehensive eye care through the “Gift of Vision” rural outreach programme.
- Rural and Urban poor served. Our community centric programme provides structured care for children and adults.
- Patients from across the country access the tertiary eye care facilities.
- Sankara has restored the vision of more than 5.5 Million rural under privileged.
- 6 million children screened for eye ailments and many children treated for eye cancers free of cost

Measurable outcome:

- Sankara has conducted 30742 outreach camps. 5.5 Million needy rural patients are treated and performed over 2.1 Million surgeries so far.
- Sankara as a group performs 750 surgeries per day with 98.8% proof of high quality eye care service

- 850 students intake per year and training them in various areas of ophthalmology.
- 2 colleges of optometry established in Bangalore and Ludhiana.
- 332 journal publications and patents granted for Sankara team's work in Ophthalmology.
- Alumni located in 16 different countries across the world.

Role Model to Others:

Being the largest community eye care provider in the world, have showcased a sustainable and scalable model for community eye care. Provided management expertise to hospitals and brought about significant improvement in workload in other hospitals. Helped the Govt of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh implement the "Rainbow" model of comprehensive paediatric eye care. Been Part of Vision 2020 an initiative of Govt of India and helped formalize the action plan of the National Programme for Control of Blindness to achieve the WHO targets.

Use of innovative and creative approaches:

- **Structured Delivery of Curative and Preventive Eye Care** – the Gift of Vision model of doorstep to doorstep total care uses field workers trained from the community to reach out to beneficiaries; they are brought to the hospital using our own logistics, treated and dropped back. Patients are thereafter reviewed after a month.
- Use of participatory approach to screen children for eye ailments has reduced health care infrastructure demands and increased reach.
- Realizing that solutions for the health care needs for our country are unique and affordability of available modalities are often a deterrent for many visually impaired patients initiated clinical applied research which has helped in establishing the temporal small incision cataract surgery as cost and time effective intervention allowing outcomes at par with other techniques, with a success rate of over 98%.
- The cost of available keratoprosthesis (artificial cornea) including the operating procedure is estimated to be around \$1500 to \$3000. Our patented device has helped patients see the world at cost less than \$300. We have also collaborated with local Indian manufacturers to make available low cost vitrectomy machine (for retinal surgeries) and a collagen cross linking device (C3R).
- Our 80: 20 model is a unique self – sustainable model wherein 20% of those who can afford to pay for the services obtained in turn support the 80% beneficiaries to whom free services are provided.
- Implementation of concept of balanced score card & key performance indicator metric in administration to achieve professionalism in management and overall operations.

Geographic Spread:

- Sankara Eye Care Institutions, founded in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu has today expanded to a pan India organisation ; with units at Coimbatore City and Krishnankoil (Tamil Nadu), Guntur (Andhra Pradesh), Bangalore and Shimoga (Karnataka), Anand (Gujarat), Ludhiana (Punjab) Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh), Jaipur(Rajasthan), Indore(Madhya Pradesh), Mumbai (Maharashtra) and the hospitals Hyderabad (Telangana) and Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) are expected to be operational by the year 2023 and 2024.
- Despite cultural differences in these geographies, we have through a structured training been able to ensure standardization in protocols and also uniformity in care. The philosophy of the organisation is central to the work ethics of every employee.
- The organisation has also been able to increase the capacity of existing facilities based on increased local need. In the current financial year infrastructure at the hospitals in Guntur is being doubled.
- Number of revenue districts covered: 146
- Over the last years SEFI has grown to a Pan - India organization with a network of 12 hospitals across 9 states.