

Education and Training

COVID 19 lockdown, the 'never ever before' situation has given rise to many first-of- its- kind events. For the first time ever, Aravind had to call off its structured training programmes and fellowship courses. After an initial phase of bewilderment, Aravind, going by the new norm of digital learning, started offering virtual CMEs and webinars targeting different cadres of eye care professionals and focusing on clinical as well as eye care management topics.

Webinar: Managing eye care services during COVID-19 pandemic

After consulting several published guidelines and interacting with experts, Aravind developed a set of protocols to be followed in order to deliver quality services at the same time safeguarding the health of staff and preventing the spread of Covid-19. With support from LAICO, a series of webinars titled *Managing eye care services during COVID-19 pandemic*, were organised to share these protocols, guidelines and resources with the wider ophthalmic community. The following topics were covered:

- Patient care protocol during COVID-19 (April 14)
- Patho-physiology of COVID-19 and treatment options (April 15)
- Risk of COVID-19 spread through the ocular route (April 15)
- Protocols and guidelines for use of personal protection equipment (PPE) (April 24)
- Operation theatre protocol (May 8)
- Preparing vision centres for post lockdown days (May 15)

Dr. Kalpana Narendran during the ReLOAD session



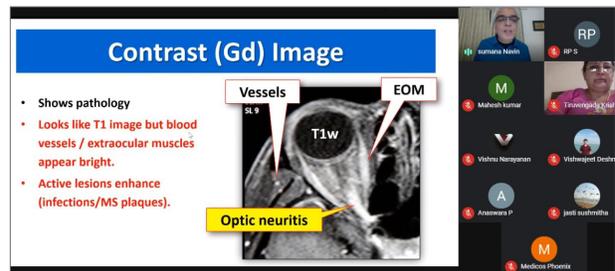
COVID-19 has triggered new ways of teaching and learning. Adapting to the new normal, most of the CMEs at Aravind were offered online. Aravind centres also organised internal training sessions to keep the staff updated on the latest developments in ophthalmology.



Refraction simplified, Aravind-Coimbatore



Library webinar, Aravind-Coimbatore



Update on neuro-ophthalmology, Aravind - Coimbatore



Phaco development workshop, Aravind - Madurai



Retina alumni webinar, Aravind - Madurai



AI in ophthalmology, Aravind-Pondicherry



Orthoptics decoded, Aravind-Tirunelveli

Similarly, Aravind Eye Hospital, Coimbatore organised the following webinars:

- Role of management & managers in ensuring safety during COVID - 19 (August 6)
- Hospital infection control practices revisited in COVID-19 Times (August 12)

Continuing education programmes organised by Aravind

- CME on Ophthalmic imaging, Aravind-Tirunelveli (April 20-23)
- Review learning on advancement and development (ReLOAD) in phacoemulsification, Aravind-Coimbatore (May 13)
- AI in ophthalmology, Aravind-Pondicherry (July 2-23)
- Update on neuro-ophthalmology (UNO) 2020 Aravind - Coimbatore (July 20-25)
- Refraction simplified, Aravind-Coimbatore (July 31)
- Orthoptics decoded, Aravind-Tirunelveli (August 28-29)
- Library webinar, Aravind-Coimbatore (October 6)
- An update on hypertensive retinopathy, Aravind-Madurai (October 7)
- Aravind retina alumni webinar series, Aravind-Madurai (October 7; November 11; December 9 and January 23)

- Phaco development workshop, Aravind-Madurai (November 6-7)
- Webinar on refraction, Aravind-Coimbatore (December 10)
- Webinar on hospital infection control and OT protocols, Aravind-Coimbatore (December 17)
- SICS webinar, Aravind-Chennai (February 16)

Writathon

Aravind-Pondicherry

To utilise free hours due to COVID lockdown to its maximum productivity, an academic extravaganza in the form of Writathon was organized to achieve maximum publications. In this sprint-like event, doctors sat together with a team of biostatistician, project coordinators and librarian and worked hard to submit their manuscript according to the guidelines of the journal. As a promising outcome, half a dozen articles by doctors at Aravind-Pondicherry got published in Indian Journal of Ophthalmology, August 2020 edition.

Participants of Writathon





Dry and wet Lab, Aravind - Pondicherry

Infrastructure development for better learning

Aravind-Pondicherry, July - 23

Aravind-Pondicherry opened a dry and wet lab for providing better learning experience to allied ophthalmic personnel and doctors respectively.

HelpMeSee sponsored two simulators to Aravind Eye Hospital, Madurai to help trainee surgeons gain surgical skills and knowledge required to perform manual small incision cataract surgery. The simulator was inaugurated by Dr. G. Natchiar on March 26, 2021.

At the inauguration of SICS Simulator



As part of a project supported by Standard Chartered Bank-Global Business Services, the free section at Aravind Eye Hospital, Madurai has been equipped with a state-of-the-art surgical training centre to monitor and improve trainee surgeons. A total of 311 doctors underwent training during April 2020 to March 2021.

Allied Ophthalmic Personnel Training

Supported by a grant from SEVA, Canada, Aravind-Chennai opened iLearn Training Hub, a learning centre for allied ophthalmic personnel and optometrists. Inaugurated on February 26, the training hub has both classrooms and skill labs for all departments of ophthalmic nursing and allied services. The skill lab displays the mission and key performance indicators of the department, instruments and equipment, and posters relevant to learning the skills. Equipment include keratometer, autorefractometer, lensometer, trial set, digital vision chart, Bjerrum's screen, slit lamps, BP machine,

Dr. G. Natchiar inaugurating iLearn Training Hub



pulse oximeter, crash cart and ECG machine.

Steps are underway at Aravind Eye Hospitals - Madurai, Chennai, Coimbatore and Tirunelveli - to offer a graduate course in optometry. Procedural formalities are currently being carried out for affiliation. Aravind is also trying to get affiliation for Diploma course in Optometry and Ophthalmic Technology for all its centres.

A.M. Alagupandi, Refraction Services, Aravind-Madurai emerged all India topper at the visual acuity recertification test conducted as part of Retina Focus Study.

AOPs across the Aravind centres were encouraged to submit papers for various conferences. About ten posters and papers submitted by the AOPs from various centres for annual conference of VISION 2020 were published on the Vision 2020 website.

A total of 60 MLOPs from opticals and refraction departments attended a 4-part

webinar series conducted by Vision 2020 in collaboration with Essilor from February 2-27, 2021. They received certificates for participating in this.

Centre for Excellence in Allied Ophthalmic Personnel Training

With funding support from Standard Chartered Bank, a project is being implemented by LAICO to develop Aravind into a Centre for excellence in training allied ophthalmic personnel (AOP). The project aims to develop standardized, high-quality training and assessment materials for over 300 competencies that eye care professionals need. These resources will be available through the web-based application (www.aurosiksha.org); which will also help Aravind and other eye care organisations to manage their AOP training. During the lockdown months of April and May 2020, Aurolab used this website to conduct online assessments for 192 of its employees. Even when

A.M. Alagupandi - All India topper at the visual acuity recertification test



AOPs at Aravind-Madurai undergoing exam as part of their training



Aravind's primary eye care centres had to be closed down, vision technicians were keenly engaged with daily quizzes that were shared through Whatsapp.

Skill assessments for AOP trainees and re-assessments for AOP employees were initiated at Aravind Eye Hospital-Madurai from July 2020. The process started with

skill mapping, reviewing assessment tools, preparing master-assessors and setting up the skill assessment stations. Over 330 AOP staff at Aravind have been enrolled and are undergoing skill competency assessment. Each AOP requires to be competent in a set of skills pertaining to his or her job role.

Residents Social Responsibility during COVID



Mr.S.Venkatesan, MP - Madurai receiving residents' contribution to the Annavaasal initiative

Residents Social Responsibility (RSR) programme at Aravind-Madurai remained active even in the era of COVID-19. Execution was modified due to the circumstances, but the spirit continued.

RSR programme supported *Annavaasal*, an initiative launched by Mr.S.Venkatesan, Member of Parliament (MP), Madurai to distribute free food packets to the workers in unorganised sectors and their families during lockdown. In collaboration with the NGO partner, *Enlight*, with whom Aravind has been working for the past 5 years, bed sheets were provided to destitute people living by the road side. For the third consecutive year, dresses were distributed to the HIV infected orphans in Anbagam Home, Dindigul on the occasion of Diwali. At Aravind-Tirunelveli, residents and senior medical officers distributed kits containing essential grocery items for the families of the hospital's sanitary staff, security personnel and lift operators.



Distribution of grocery kit, Aravind - Tirunelveli

The days of uncertainty brought in by the lockdown and being in the hostel away from the family was emotionally stressful to many of the AOPs. To address this several activities were organised to lift up their spirits as well as to offer a good learning experience. Awareness exhibitions on varied clinical topics were also arranged by various centres.

Handicrafts by AOPs in different centres during lockdown



Exhibition during lockdown, Aravind - Udumalpet



Awareness creation on multiple sclerosis, Aravind - Coimbatore



Learning session at Aravind - Pondicherry



Yoga during lockdown, Aravind - Madurai



Candidates Trained 2020 - 2021

Total Candidates: 243

POSTGRADUATE COURSES

Diploma in Ophthalmology (2 years)	8
Master of Surgery in Ophthalmology (3 years)	13
Diplomate of the National Board (3 years)	21
Post DO DNB (2 years)	20

LONG-TERM OPHTHALMOLOGY FELLOWSHIP

Ant. Segment / Intraocular Lens Microsurgery (2 years)	18
Orbit & Oculoplasty (18 months)	7
Paediatric Ophthalmology & Strabismus (18 months)	12
Glaucoma (2 years)	14
Retina Vitreous (2 years)	27
Cornea (18 months)	26
Comprehensive Ophthalmology (2 years) Fellowship in General Ophthalmology	4 16

SHORT-TERM FELLOWSHIP (FOR INTERNATIONAL CANDIDATES)

Orbit & Oculoplasty (6 months)	1
Cornea (1 year)	1
Retina (1 year)	2

SHORT-TERM CLINICAL COURSES FOR OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

Neuro-Ophthalmology (3 months)	1
Phacoemulsification (1 month)	2

SHORT-TERM PARAMEDICAL COURSES

Orthoptist (6 months)	2
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MANAGEMENT COURSES

Project Management training for Eye Care (online) - (4 weeks)	16
Online Course on Ophthalmic Instruments Maintenance - Part I	32

To Sir(s), with Love

Dear Chairman Sir

Aravind trained us. It is our duty and our honor to do something now...

More than 20 trainees donated 36,000 Yuan within hours. Two of them just visited Madurai for one week.

One donor is from Wuhan which you know was the epicenter just months ago. He had been working at the frontline for months. He was a trainee in Tirunelveli. . .

Dear Sirs, please take care, stay safe.

Yours,
Hao

That sweet note is from Dr. Hao, who did his IOL training and glaucoma fellowship at Aravind-Tirunelveli. A good friend of the Aravind family and a great ambassador for Aravind's work, Dr Hao took the initiative to get in touch with other Chinese ophthalmologists who had trained at Aravind. Together they have arranged to send 200 safety goggles and 2,000 N-95 equivalent masks.



Dr. Hao with Sanil and Dr. Sivakumar



Dr. Ramakrishnan with Dr. Hao and Dr. Zhang Lei

**Thank you Dear Aravind alumni in China!
We are touched by your kind gesture in this time of need!**