

Editorial

Smarter Devices, Better Sight : The New Face of Eye Care

- Advancing Ophthalmic Technology

The future of eye care is no longer on the horizon it's already reshaping clinics, operating rooms, and even living rooms. As ophthalmic technology continues to evolve, a new generation of diagnostic and surgical devices is redefining precision, efficiency, and patient care. From A.I.-powered imaging to wearable sensors and remote monitoring tools, innovation is transforming how clinicians diagnose, treat, and manage ocular conditions.

Diagnostic Accuracy Reimagined: Emerging devices are pushing the boundaries of what's possible in early detection and disease monitoring. High-resolution OCT systems, portable fundus cameras, and A.I.-assisted screening tools are enabling clinicians to identify retinal and optic nerve pathologies with unprecedented clarity. These technologies are not only improving diagnostic accuracy but also expanding access to care especially in underserved or remote communities.

Surgical Tools: Evaluating Innovation Before Adoption:

Leading eye care experts all over the world point out



that the Eye Care Network explored how clinicians assess new surgical technologies before integrating them into practice. From femtosecond lasers to robotic-assisted systems, the emphasis is on safety, reproducibility, and clinical outcomes. Ophthalmic surgeons are increasingly relying on data-driven evaluations, peer-reviewed studies, and hands-on trials to determine whether a device truly enhances procedural efficiency and patient recovery.

Navigating Limitations in Complex Cases: Despite these advances, challenges remain. Complex cases such as advanced glaucoma, retinal detachment, or corneal dystrophies still demand nuanced clinical judgment and may fall outside the capabilities of even the most sophisticated devices. Innovators acknowledge that while technology can augment decision-making, it cannot replace the experience and intuition of skilled ophthalmologists.

Wearables and Home Monitoring: A New Era of Patient Management: Perhaps the most transformative shift is happening beyond the clinic walls. Wearable devices like smart contact lenses and home-based tonometers are empowering patients to monitor intraocular pressure, visual acuity, and other metrics in real time. These tools offer

K. Ranganathan
EDITOR

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**Lead
View**

India's Eye Care Crisis : Just 1 Ophthalmologist for 65,000 People

India is grappling with a significant shortage of eye care professionals, a challenge that deeply affects its mission to eliminate avoidable blindness. A recent survey by AIIMS, Delhi, reveals that there is only one ophthalmologist for every 65,000 people a stark contrast to the Vision 2020 target of 25,000 ophthalmologists and 48,000 hospital-based paramedics to be achieved by 2020 for eliminating avoidable Blindness in India.

Currently, 20,944 ophthalmologists and 17,849 optometrists serve at secondary and tertiary levels nationwide. However, their distribution is uneven, with southern and western states better resourced than northern and eastern regions. States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and West Bengal face acute shortages, highlighting a pressing need for equitable access.

Led by Dr. Praveen Vashist from the Dr. Rajendra Prasad Centre for Ophthalmic Sciences at AIIMS, Delhi, the study assessed human resources and infrastructure across 8,790 eye care institutes, with an impressive 89.9% response rate. The national average stands at one eye institute per 1,64,536 people, with Delhi NCR showing the highest concentration among union territories.

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Sankar Foundation's Newsletter "Visionary Insights" Wins National Recognition

Sankar Foundation's monthly newsletter "Visionary Insights" has won the 2nd Prize at the 47th PRSI National Awards 2025, competing against major PSUs, private organizations, and NGOs across the country, according to the results declared by Dr Ajit Pathak, National Chairman, PRSI in New Delhi on 23rd November 2025 following a rigorous evaluation by the Awards Jury comprising distinguished experts and eminent personalities in the field.

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Setting Global Standards in High-Tech Eye Care

China's 4,200 km Remote Eye Surgery Stuns the World

In a remarkable milestone for ophthalmic science, Chinese ophthalmologists have successfully performed the world's first remote sub-retinal injection bridging a distance of over 4,200 kilometers in November '25. The pioneering procedure,



announced by Sun Yat-sen University, reflects a profound leap forward in telemedicine and precision eye care.

Using a high-speed 5G network, doctors at the Zhongshan Eye Center in Guangzhou operated a robotic surgical arm to treat a patient in Urumqi, Xinjiang. With extraordinary precision and care, the surgical team guided a microneedle into the patient's eye, delivering medication beneath the retina all completed in under seven minutes.

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Performance at a Glance

Total Eye Surgeries : 4,99,531 Since Inception
Total Outpatients Screened : 29,01,011 Since Inception

"Visionary Insights" Wins National Recognition

The prestigious award will be presented to Sankar Foundation during the PRSI National Conference in Dehradun from 13th to 15th December, 2025.

The Board of Trustees, led by Sri M Ramdas, the Managing Trustee, Sri A Krishna Kumar and Trustees Sri A Prasanna Kumar, Sri A Vijay Kumar, and General Manager Sri K Radhakrishnan, extended their heartfelt congratulations to the Editor Sri K Bangar Raju and the editorial team for achieving this national-level recognition. This honor underscores Sankar Foundation's commitment to excellence in communication and awareness in the field of Ophthalmology, further strengthening its role as a trusted voice in eye care. The achievement positions Sankar Foundation as a nationally recognised leader in eye care management. The newsletter has earned acclaim for its timely delivery, attractive layout, and engaging content.

China Stuns the World

"This operation marks an important step towards the practical application of remote high-precision ophthalmic surgery in China," said Dr. Lin Haotian of the Zhongshan Eye Center. This achievement not only showcases China's rapid progress in medical robotics and telecommunications, but also holds deep promise for patients in remote and underserved regions. By reducing the need for long-distance travel and expanding access to specialized treatments, such innovations bring compassionate, high-quality care closer to those who need it most transforming lives, one eye at a time.

(Insights by **K Bangar Raju**, Editor with inputs from News.Az)

India's Eye Care Crisis : Just 1 Ophthalmologist for 65,000 People

The disparity is further reflected in the number of ophthalmologists per million population ranging from 127 in Puducherry to just two in Ladakh. Only 40.5% of institutes offer 24-hour emergency eye care, and a mere 5.7% have eye banks with tissue processing capabilities.

Sub-specialty services are more prevalent in the private sector, underscoring gaps in public and NGO-led care. Compared globally, India's ratio of ophthalmologists per million is 15, compared to 76.2 in high-income countries.

The availability of sub-specialties such as cataract, glaucoma, squint, uvea and vitreo-retina, keratoplasty, oculoplasty, and neuro-ophthalmology was notably greater in private sector institutes compared to those in the NGO and public sectors, according to the study.

To meet the 2030 goal of eliminating avoidable blindness, the study urges stronger investment, improved data systems, and coordinated efforts across sectors. Compassionate, need-based planning and sustained commitment are essential to ensure every individual, regardless of region, has access to quality eye care.

The study also underscores an urgent need to fortify India's Health Management Information System with a robust human resources (HR) component. This enhancement is critical to building a reliable evidence base that can guide strategic planning ensuring that qualified health workers are available where they are needed most, and when they are needed.

It also highlights glaring disparities in the distribution of eye care professionals across the country, revealing significant gaps in the pursuit of universal health coverage. The uneven spread of HR resources especially in underserved regions calls for coordinated monitoring and evaluation efforts. Effective collaboration between the Union Health Ministry and other data-rich sectors is essential to generate accurate, actionable insights.

To close these gaps, the study calls for sustained investment both financial and institutional and a firm commitment from professional and political stakeholders. Strengthening eye care services demands not just infrastructure, but a strategic, need-based approach to workforce development that prioritizes equity, access, and long-term impact.

(Insights by **K Bangar Raju**, Editor – With inputs from Press Trust of India (PTI) story published in The Economic Times)

The New Face of Eye Care

clinicians a continuous stream of data, enabling proactive interventions and personalized treatment plans. As these technologies become more integrated into everyday life, they promise to reduce hospital visits, improve adherence, and elevate the standard of care.

Ophthalmology stands at the intersection of innovation and impact. As device technology continues to bridge the gap between lab and clinic, the focus remains clear: delivering smarter, faster, and more compassionate care. The journey ahead is not just about seeing better it's about seeing the future of medicine unfold, one breakthrough at a time.

Letters to the Editor

★ Extremely professional newsletter with both academics and events well covered in a very scientific manner. I look forward to receiving it every time since it is more than just a newsletter, it's an information powerhouse which helps in day to day practice.

- **Dr Sunil Morekar**, Consultant Ophthalmologist, Lilavati Hospital, Bandra, Mumbai, SL Raheja Hospital Mahim Mumbai, Fortis Hiranandini Hospital, Navi Mumbai, Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Reliance Hospital, Navi Mumbai & Apollo Hospital, Belapur Navi Mumbai.

★ The newsletter editorials are highly informative, innovative, and presented

with great professionalism. The layout and content are visually appealing, and the articles focus exclusively on ophthalmology. Kudos to the editorial team for their excellent work.

- **Dr N. Viswanath**, Gastroenterologist, Seven Hills Hospital, Visakhapatnam

★ The Sankar Foundation's new initiative is indeed a welcome move! The editorial team's efforts have resulted in a fantastic publication that highlights the foundation's work and impact. Kudos to the team for their hard work and dedication.

- **G. Janardhana Rao**, Business Editor, Telugu People.com & Senior Asst Editor (Retired) New Indian Express

★ Sankar Foundation's monthly Newsletter is excellent. The editorial, the journal layout and the articles were very impressive.

- **Sri MVR Sarma**, Retired Executive Director, Vizag Steel Plant

We warmly invite you to share your feedback or suggestions in a crisp and thoughtful manner. Help us celebrate and elevate this new column!

K Bangar Raju, Dy General Manager (PR & Liaison) & Editor : Reach us on WhatsApp at 98481 89378

**Your Vision is
Our Mission**

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF INNOVATION IN OPHTHALMOLOGY

There is no question that the past five decades have ushered in a golden era for ophthalmology-transforming the way eye care is delivered and dramatically improving patient outcomes. As part of Ophthalmology Times' 50th anniversary celebration, the Eye Care Network invited leading voices in the field to reflect on the most impactful innovations that have shaped modern ophthalmic practice.

Fifty years of innovation have reshaped how ophthalmologists treat eyes and restore vision, setting the stage for the next chapter of technological and surgical breakthroughs.

From the advent of phacoemulsification and intraocular lenses to the rise of minimally invasive glaucoma surgery (MIGS), retinal therapeutics, and A.I.-powered diagnostics, ophthalmology has evolved into one of the most technologically advanced specialties in medicine. These breakthroughs have not only refined surgical precision but also elevated the standard of care for millions of patients worldwide.

"Everything Has Changed": A New Era of Cataract Surgery

Eric D. Donnenfeld, MD, of OCLI Vision and NYU Langone, described the transformation as total. "Everything has changed. There's not anything that I do today that's remotely similar to the way I was trained several years in the past," he said. He emphasized cataract surgery as a cornerstone of ophthalmic advancement. Once a procedure requiring large incisions and sutures, it

has evolved into a highly precise, minimally invasive operation. "We've gone from large incision with sutures to small incisions. Optical biometry has further revolutionized outcomes, enabling patients to achieve spectacle independence with remarkable accuracy. Beyond cataracts, he highlighted progress in ocular surface disease and glaucoma. "Interventional glaucoma, lasers, and drug delivery systems have changed everything," he said. "The ultimate recipient of all these advances are our patients."



Cataract and Glaucoma: A Dual Frontier of Progress

Jai Parekh, MD, MBA, FAAO, co-founder of EyeCare Consultants of New Jersey, echoed the sentiment. "Cataract surgery has come a long way: smaller incisions, better recovery times," he noted, adding that rising patient expectations are being met with increasingly sophisticated solutions. Parekh spotlighted the evolution of glaucoma care as one of the most dynamic areas in ophthalmology. Today's toolkit includes trabecular bypass, goniotomy, canaloplasty, and sustained-release drug

delivery. "The three pillars of interventional glaucoma are laser technology, drug delivery, and MIGS," Parekh emphasized. "All MIGS matter."

Refractive Surgery : Embracing the Lens-Based Revolution - Eva Kim, MD, of ICON Eyecare in Denver, CO, highlighted the growing acceptance of lens-based refractive surgery as a major paradigm shift. "One of the most significant advancements is the trend toward lens-based surgery for refractive purposes," she said. Kim praised the expanding portfolio of IOLs, including multifocal and light-adjustable lenses, which offer tailored visual outcomes.

Across Subspecialties: A Tapestry of Innovation : Joaquin De Rojas, MD, of the Center for Sight in Sarasota, Florida, reflected on the breadth of progress across subspecialties. "Retinal injections for wet AMD have to be up there, and now injections available for dry AMD for atrophy," he said. Advances in corneal surgery, noting that Descemet's stripping endothelial keratoplasty (DSEK) and Descemet's membrane endothelial keratoplasty (DMEK) procedures have reduced the need for full-thickness grafts offering faster recovery and better visual outcomes.

The Future of Ophthalmology As emerging technologies and artificial intelligence reshape medicine, ophthalmology stands poised for another wave of transformation-where precision, personalization, and predictive power will define the next 50 years of eye care.

(Written by **K. Bangar Raju**, Editor, with experts input from Ophthalmology Times)

SALPG Sponsored Free Eye Camp in Collaboration with Sankar Foundation

South Asia LPG Company Pvt. Ltd. (SALPG), India's first underground LPG storage cavern and a trusted provider of energy storage solutions, partnered with Sankar Foundation to organize a comprehensive free eye screening camp at Jnanapuram, within Vizag city limits, on 22nd and 23rd November 2025 as part of its CSR initiative.

The camp was inaugurated by Sri Ramnath, Manager (CSR), SALPG, in the presence of Sri V. Ramesh Kumar, DGM (Patient Care) and other officials from Sankar Foundation. The initiative received an overwhelming response from the local community, reflecting the deep need for accessible eye care services.

SALPG has consistently stood alongside Sankar Foundation, supporting both infrastructure development and patient well-being. This camp was yet another step in their shared mission to bring light and clarity to those in need.

The screenings were conducted with dedication by Dr. Anna and Dr. Apoorva from Sankar Foundation. Behind the



Doctors screening patients in the presence of SALPG and Sankar Foundation officials.

Key Highlights

- ▶ Patients screened: 1,434 – a record turnout
- ▶ Glasses prescribed: 1,047 patients
- ▶ Spot delivery of glasses: 961 patients received immediate support
- ▶ Eye surgeries and procedures identified: 78 patients

scenes, a committed team of employees, nursing staff, optometrists, optical specialists, transport, and outreach team worked tirelessly to ensure smooth operations.

Every patient selected for surgery successfully underwent the procedure and was safely transported back to their respective pick-up points, ensuring not just medical care but also dignity and comfort throughout the process.

Your Sight is Our Priority

Sankar Foundation Celebrates Healthcare Students Achievements

On 5th November 2025, Sankar Foundation Eye Hospital and Institute hosted a prestigious award ceremony to honour exceptional students from its healthcare college, recognizing their academic excellence, resilience, and dedication.

Notable Student Achievements

► **Ms. Shruthi**, 3rd-year B.Sc Optometry student, earned distinction, driven by her unwavering self-confidence.

► **Ms. Dharani**, DMST student, secured first rank in her class, triumphing over neurological challenges with remarkable perseverance.

► **Ms. Kavyanjali**, DOA student from the 2022 batch, achieved the state-first rank through consistent hard work.

► **Ms. Bharani**, DOA student from the 2023 batch, topped her class with outstanding performance.

► **Ms. Naga Syamala**, MPHWS student, excelled academically despite financial hardships, demonstrating exceptional time management and commitment.



Sri A Krishna Kumar, Managing Trustee congratulating the students in his address.

► **Mr. J. Manmadha Rao**, 3rd-year B.Sc Optometry student, received a cash award of ₹ 5,000 and reimbursement of ₹ 4,477 for his winning oral presentation at a conference held in Chennai.

Leadership Acknowledgements

► **Sri Atamakuri Krishna Kumar**, Managing Trustee, congratulated the students and commended their dedication, urging them to aim high and set new benchmarks in the healthcare field.

► **Mr. K. Radhakrishnan**, General Manager, emphasized the value of perseverance and hard work in achieving success.



The dignitaries are with the meritorious students

► **Professor Dr. P. Krishna Prasad**, Principal, reaffirmed the college's commitment to nurturing student potential and fostering academic excellence.

► **Dr. Nasrin**, Vice-Principal, applauded the students' accomplishments and encouraged them to continue striving for excellence.

The management also expressed deep appreciation for the invaluable contributions of faculty and mentors in shaping the students' journeys.

RICH EXCHANGE OF EXPERTISE

SANKAR FOUNDATION STEALS THE SPOTLIGHT AT 34TH VRSI CONFERENCE IN GOA



Dr Annaji Rao giving his video presentation.

A team of senior doctors from the Retina Department of Sankar Foundation proudly participated in the 34th Annual Conference of the Vitreo Retinal Society of India (VRSI), held in Goa on 1st and 2nd November 2025.

Among the top 12 competitive video presentations, Dr. K Annaji Rao, Senior Consultant, Retina Department, Sankar Foundation, earned widespread appreciation for his insightful video titled "Innovative SRF Management Under Silicone Oil in ReRD: A Case of Precision Without Balance Salt Solution (BSS)". His presentation captivated moderators, judges, and attendees alike, earning recognition for its clinical depth and innovative approach.



Our doctors at the conference.

Dr. Ajay Sharma, Dr. T Krishna, Dr. Harshit, and Dr. Manali, esteemed members and alumni of Sankar Foundation actively contributed to the conference. The team members also submitted both physical and e-poster presentations, showcasing their commitment to advancing retinal care and sharing knowledge with the wider ophthalmic community.

The conference witnessed participation from senior ophthalmologists representing leading national and international eye care institutions, fostering a rich exchange of ideas and expertise. It fostered collaboration, innovation, and shared learning in the pursuit of excellence in retinal care.

School Children Eye Screening by L&T



Sri Yadwinder Singh, Head of Admin & Security, L&T, witnessing the school children eye camp

Larsen & Toubro (L&T), an Indian multinational conglomerate, has consistently supported Sankar Foundation through its CSR initiatives, particularly in organizing eye screening camps for government school children across the district.

As part of this programme, a two-day camp was conducted at ZP High School, Anandapuram, on 10th & 11th November 2025. A total of 669 students were screened by Dr. Gauthami and a dedicated team from Sankar Foundation. During the camp, 87 students were prescribed corrective glasses to improve their vision.

The camp was held in the presence of Sri Yadwinder Singh, Head of Admin & Security, L&T, Sri Ramakondal Rao, Manager (CSR), and staff members from ZPHS, who extended their support to the initiative.

**Get Clear Vision
for a Great Life**

AI-POWERED FUNDUS IMAGING: TRANSFORMING GLAUCOMA DETECTION

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of vision impairment worldwide and the second most common cause of blindness. By 2040, an estimated **112 million people** will be affected. With the aging global population, glaucoma cases will continue to rise, placing a significant burden on healthcare resources. The impact of glaucoma-related vision loss extends beyond eyesight it is strongly linked to reduced **quality of life, physical functioning, and mental health.**

Although glaucoma is irreversible, early diagnosis of glaucomatous optic neuropathy allows timely treatment that can slow or prevent disease progression and blindness.

Detection of Glaucoma by Clinicians

Glaucoma is a chronic, progressive optic neuropathy characterized by structural changes in the optic nerve head (ONH) and retinal nerve fibre layer (RNFL), which lead to visual defects.

- * These changes manifest as a gradual narrowing of the neuroretinal rim (NRR), reflecting degeneration of retinal ganglion cells, axons, and astrocytes.
- * Clinicians assess the NRR by identifying the cup and disc boundary contours, which are critical for diagnosis.
- * AI-assisted imaging can provide precise details of optic cup and disc contours, supporting clinicians in both diagnosis and patient education.

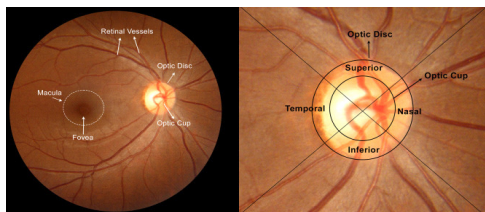


Fig. 1. Fundus photograph examples (A- left) with labels of the optic nerve head and (B - right) with (Inferior-Superior-Nasal-Temporal) ISNT quadrants.

Need for Imaging Modalities in Glaucoma Detection

Detecting glaucoma is complex and time-intensive, requiring multiple examinations and clinical expertise. Once suspected through fundus imaging, patients undergo a comprehensive evaluation including:

- * Visual acuity testing
- * Intraocular pressure (IOP) measurement
- * Gonio copy
- * Visual field assessment

Imaging modalities are particularly valuable because structural abnormalities in the ONH often precede visual field loss. Among these, fundus imaging using color fundus cameras is a key tool.

Role of Fundus Cameras in Glaucoma

Fundus cameras are specialized imaging devices designed to capture detailed images of the retina, optic disc, and blood vessel structures essential for glaucoma assessment.

How They Work

Fundus cameras combine optics and digital imaging to produce high-resolution retinal images, enabling clinicians to visualize subtle changes in the ONH crucial for early glaucoma detection.



Dr examining the patient using Fundus Camera

Advantages of Fundus Cameras in Glaucoma Diagnosis

- * **Early Detection:** Reveal minute ONH changes for timely intervention.
- * **Non-Invasive:** Painless, safe, and ideal for screening.
- * **Portability:** Modern portable fundus cameras provide high-quality imaging at lower cost, making them suitable for community-based screening programs outside hospitals.
- * **Cost-Effective:** Affordable devices are accessible in rural centres, local clinics, and hospitals.

Dr Keerthana

Consultant, Glaucoma



- * **More efficient :** AI-enabled fundus imaging can minimize observer bias and fatigue, supporting large-scale, low-cost screening in underserved regions with limited ophthalmologists.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Fundus Imaging

A.I. algorithms are increasingly integrated into fundus cameras to:

- * Detect subtle, early-stage changes invisible to the human eye
- * Improve diagnostic accuracy
- * Automate image interpretation for screening, referral decisions, and patient monitoring

This integration positions A.I. as a critical tool in frontline eye care.

Limitations and Future Directions

While fundus cameras are highly effective, they must be used alongside other diagnostic methods such as IOP measurement and visual field testing to ensure comprehensive glaucoma evaluation.

Conclusion

Fundus imaging remains the simplest and most accessible modality for ONH assessment. Its relatively low cost and wide availability makes it a practical tool for detecting glaucomatous neuropathy. With the integration of A.I.-driven analysis, fundus imaging holds immense potential for automatic glaucoma screening, even in resource-limited regions worldwide.



State of the art Fundus Camera

**Your Future is Bright,
See it Clearly**

EVENTS

PFIZER SPONSORS FREE EYE CAMP IN ASSOCIATION WITH SANKAR FOUNDATION

Pfizer Healthcare India Pvt Ltd, a leading multinational pharmaceutical and biotechnology company, in collaboration with Sankar Foundation, inaugurated a comprehensive free eye screening camp at Parawada under their CSR initiative on 18th November 2025.

The camp was formally inaugurated by Sri B. Muralidhar Sarma, Head of Pfizer's unit in the district, in the presence of senior officials from Pfizer and including Sri K. Radhakrishnan, General Manager and Sri V. Ramesh Kumar, DGM (Patient Care) of Sankar Foundation.

Speaking on the occasion, Sri Muralidhar Sarma expressed his delight at partnering with Sankar Foundation, commending its commitment to delivering quality eye care services. He



Doctors screening patients in the presence of Pfizer Heads of Departments and Sankar Foundation officials. emphasized Pfizer's intention to continue this association in the future to benefit more patients. Several Pfizer officials attended, including : Sri Ravichandra K. (Quality Head), Sri Vijay Mahajan (Production Head), Sri Rajesh Ravuri (Finance Head), Sri Aravind Jayaraman (EHS Head), Sri P. Ramesh (Business Excellence Head), Sri Satjeet Singh (Technology Head), Dr. Eswara Rao, Sri M.V. Rama Raju (Public Affairs)

Key Highlights of the Event

The eye camp witnessed huge response from the nearby villages.

Fact Sheet

- 555 Out patients screened
- 407 Glasses prescribed
- 370 glasses spot delivery
- 55 patients selected for eye surgery
- 105 patients were given medicines

Doctors from Sankar Foundation Dr. Srilakshmi, Dr. Apoorva, and Dr. Pavan conducted patient screenings. The camp was supported by a dedicated team of Sankar Foundation employees and paramedical staff, led by Sri N. Appala Raju, Senior Manager (Outreach). All patients successfully underwent eye surgeries and were safely dropped back at their respective pick-up points

SILENT DAMAGE : HOW DIABETES CLOUDS EYE HEALTH

Diabetes can seriously affect eye health by damaging the tiny blood vessels in the retina, leading to conditions like diabetic retinopathy, cataracts, and glaucoma. These changes can cause blurred vision, vision loss, or even blindness if not detected early. Regular eye exams are essential for prevention and timely treatment.

World Health Organization (WHO) has announced November as Diabetes Month, with World Diabetes Day observed on **November 14** each year. The 2025 theme is "**Diabetes across life stages**", highlighting that diabetes affects people from childhood to older age and requires integrated care throughout life.

A Brief Story on WHO's Diabetes Month : In November 2025, the **World Health Organization (WHO)** once again turned the spotlight on diabetes, a condition that touches millions across the globe. As part of its annual campaign, WHO declared **November as Diabetes Month**, culminating in **World Diabetes Day on November 14**. This year's theme, "**Diabetes across life stages**", carried a powerful message: diabetes is not confined to one age group or lifestyle it is a lifelong challenge that demands attention at every stage of life.

Childhood: WHO emphasized the importance of early screening and education for children, especially as childhood obesity and sedentary habits increase the risk of type 2 diabetes.

Reproductive years: Women managing diabetes during pregnancy were

WORLD DIABETES DAY

highlighted, as maternal health directly impacts the next generation.

Working age: The campaign addressed workplace stigma and the need for supportive environments where employees with diabetes can thrive.

Older adulthood: WHO reminded the world that older adults often face complications and require accessible, affordable care.

The campaign's life-course approach encouraged governments, healthcare providers, and communities to integrate diabetes prevention and management into everyday systems. WHO's call was clear: health, dignity, and self-management must be supported for every person living with diabetes, regardless of age or background.

Why It Matters

*** Global reach:** Diabetes is no longer just an "urban disease." It affects rural and urban populations alike, transcending geography.

*** Equity in care:** WHO stressed the need for policies that bridge gaps in healthcare access, ensuring that no one is left behind.

*** Empowerment:** By focusing on self-care and supportive environments, the campaign empowers individuals to live healthier, fuller lives.

In essence, WHO's Diabetes Month is not just about awareness it's about **action, inclusivity, and hope**. It reminds the world that diabetes is a shared challenge, and only through collective effort can we build a healthier future.

by **K Bangar Raju**, Editor

SANKAR FOUNDATION SIGNS AN MOU WITH HINDUSTAN SHIPYARD LIMITED

In a heartfelt step towards advancing paediatric eye care, Sankar Foundation signed a tri-partite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Hindustan Shipyards Limited (HSL), a Mini Ratna Defence Public Sector Undertaking, and Forus Health Private Limited on 3rd November 2025 at the HSL administrative office in Visakhapatnam. Under HSL's Corporate Social Responsibility initiative, the MoU paves the way for a generous donation of Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) imaging equipment valued at ₹18.46 lakhs.



The MoU documents were exchanged in the presence of Sri D Srinivas Rao, Chief General Manager (Commercial), HSL, Sri K Radhakrishnan, General Manager (Administration & Operations), Sankar Foundation and Sri D Muniratnam, Regional Business Manager, Forus Health Private Limited. Sri V Ramesh Kumar, DGM (PC & CR) Sankar Foundation and officials from HSL and others were present on the occasion. Sri A Krishna Kumar, Managing Trustee of Sankar Foundation said that "This support is not just a donation it's a lifeline for children at risk of losing their sight. We are truly thankful," to HSL.

**Love Yourself,
Love Your Eye Safety**

Lighting Up Could Dim Your Sight

CLEAR VISION STARTS WITH QUITTING SMOKING

Smoking poses a serious threat to eye health, increasing the risk of conditions like age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and glaucoma both of which can lead to permanent vision loss. Even e-cigarettes and second hand smoke carry risks, underscoring the importance of quitting to protect your sight.

Cigarette smoke contains toxic chemicals that enter the bloodstream and damage delicate tissues in the retina, lens, and macula. Over time, this can lead to AMD and glaucoma. Research in the **Journal of Ophthalmology** identifies smoking as the most significant modifiable risk factor for AMD. Tobacco compounds trigger inflammation, restrict blood flow to tiny ocular vessels, and damage the optic nerve, while nicotine raises blood pressure and heart rate, compounding the harm.

Macular Degeneration and Smoking AMD is a leading cause of vision impairment. While genetics play a major role up to 70% of cases smoking can dramatically increase the risk, especially in those genetically predisposed. According to the **National Institute of Health**, nearly one-third of AMD cases involve both genetic and smoking-related factors. Smoking also reduces the effectiveness of AMD treatments, making early lifestyle changes vital.

Surface-Level Damage and Second hand Smoke Handling cigarettes can irritate the eyes. Residue from nicotine and tar may contaminate contact lenses, causing redness, discomfort, and dryness. Chronic irritation can contribute to cataracts, dry eye syndrome, and uveitis. Second hand smoke is equally harmful studies in **JAMA Ophthalmology** show that even minimal exposure in children can damage retinal blood vessels, increasing future risk of eye disorders. Smoking during pregnancy may lead to underdeveloped optic nerves and other vision problems in infants.



E-Cigarettes and Cannabis Though marketed as safer, e-cigarettes and vaporizers still pose risks. Nicotine elevates blood pressure and heart rate, while other chemicals may cause oxidative stress and inflammation. Prolonged use can lead to cataracts, retinal damage, and dry eye. Some vapors contain formaldehyde, a known

eye irritant. Cannabis smoke may also release inflammatory compounds, despite its temporary effect on eye pressure. Protective steps like using filters, limiting exposure, and scheduling regular eye exams can help mitigate damage.

Protecting Your Vision Quitting smoking is the most effective way to safeguard your eyes. It can slow disease progression and reduce the risk of severe vision loss. Regular eye exams are essential, especially for current or former smokers, as many conditions develop silently. Additional protective habits include:

- * Eating a diet rich in leafy greens, fruits, and antioxidants
- * Maintaining healthy blood pressure and cholesterol
- * Exercising regularly to support vascular health
- * Avoiding second hand smoke whenever possible

By embracing these changes, you can preserve your vision and support lifelong eye health.

Disclaimer: This article is for general informational purposes only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always consult a qualified healthcare provider regarding any medical condition or lifestyle change. (Insights by **K Bangar Raju**, Editor with inputs from Times Of India Lifestyle)

SHORT TAKES

Advances in Corneal Implants

Corneal diseases affect nearly six million people worldwide, fuelling demand for artificial and bioengineered corneas. The growing adoption of artificial corneas and corneal implants provides new hope for patients suffering from corneal blindness or severe damage.

Innovations in regenerative medicine, robotics, and A.I. are transforming treatment, offering minimally invasive options with faster recovery. The global artificial cornea and corneal implant market is witnessing remarkable expansion, driven by the growing burden

of corneal diseases and advancements in ophthalmic technology. With donor tissue shortages persisting, synthetic implants provide scalable, cost-effective solutions. The global market, valued at USD 468.85 million in 2024, is projected to reach USD 831.98 million by 2033, growing at a CAGR of 6.25%.

The Laser Revolution in Refractive Surgery :

Dr. Arjan S. Hura of the Maloney-Shamie-Hura Vision Institute in Los Angeles, spotlighted 2025's breakthrough in laser vision correction: WaveLight Plus LASIK with ray tracing, enabling many patients to achieve 20/10 vision often within a day. He emphasized personalized care, noting that 10–15% of candidates are turned

away to ensure safety and optimal outcomes. Treatment recommendations vary: Hura outlined different procedures for various patient profiles.

For high myopes (those with prescriptions beyond -6 or -8), he recommended EVO ICL surgery due to its reversibility and better night time vision quality. For patients between -1 and -6 years with healthy corneas, laser vision correction was typically suggested. Patients in their mid-40s to early 50s might be recommended refractive lens exchange.

He underscored ethical practice and expectation management as key to long-term success.

(Insights by **K Bangar Raju**, Editor with inputs from Ophthalmology Times)

**The eyes reflect what is
in the heart and soul.**

Clinical Snapshot Metrics- November 2025

✦ Total Eye Surgeries	2,897
✦ Cataract Surgeries	2,108
✦ Retina Surgeries	84
✦ Retina Injections	201
✦ Glaucoma Surgeries	16
✦ Cornea Surgeries	235
✦ Pediatric Surgeries	04
✦ Orbit & Oculoplasty	56
✦ Total OP Screened	16,577

BRANCHES

✦ Srikakulam	
Eye Surgeries	333
✦ OP Screened	1,837
✦ Maddilapalem	
Surgeries	106
✦ OP Screened	1,321
✦ Gajuwaka	
Surgeries	26
✦ OP Screened	1,098
✦ Madhurawada	
Surgeries	19
✦ OP Screened	673
✦ Total 53 Outreach free eye camps conducted and screened 5105 patients and Performed 1190 surgeries	

EDITOR
K BANGAR RAJU
Dy GM (PR & Liaison)

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CQIR & Head, Glaucoma

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Sankar Foundation Sets Benchmark in Academic Excellence with NBEMS Accreditation

Sankar Foundation Eye Hospital and Institute has reached a landmark achievement in academic excellence by securing renewal of accreditation from the **National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS)**, recognized by the Government of India.

This prestigious accreditation is valid for five years, from **December 2025 to December 2030**, and marks a significant step forward in the institution's academic journey. Sankar Foundation has held DNB accreditation since 2011, with renewals granted every five years.

Why this matters:

- ❑ The accreditation enables admissions into six **Diplomate of National Board (DNB)** seats in **Ophthalmology** every year at Sankar Foundation.
- ❑ DNB qualifications are **equivalent**

to an **MS degree**, offering postgraduate medical aspirants a nationally recognized pathway to specialization.

- ❑ Only a select few hospitals in Andhra Pradesh hold this distinction, placing Sankar Foundation among the region's leading centres for advanced medical education.
- ❑ Candidates who qualify in **NEET PG** can now pursue **DNB Ophthalmology** at Sankar Foundation, strengthening the pipeline of highly skilled eye specialists for the state and beyond.

Sri K Krishna Kumar, Managing Trustee, **Sri K Radhakrishnan**, GM (Admn & Operations), and **Prof. P Krishna Prasad**, Professor of Medical Education, extended heartfelt congratulations to the doctors and faculty for this remarkable achievement.

Sankar Foundation Doctors visit Sadguru Netra Chikitsalaya



Our doctors with
Sadguru Netralaya team

A team of senior doctors from Sankar Foundation visited Sadguru Netra Chikitsalaya (SNC), Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh, maintained by Sadguru Seva Sangh Trust to study their facilities and engage in a meaningful exchange of knowledge on operations, best practices and research in Ophthalmology.

A delegation of Dr. T. Raveendra, Director – CQI & Research & HOD Glaucoma, Dr. Nasrin, Director – Medical Administration & Training & HOD Cornea, Dr. Ajay Sharma, Senior Consultant – Retina, and Sri K.V. Venugopal, DGM (Operations), spent two days at SNC from 20th November 2025. During their visit, they held detailed deliberations on the hospital's quality of services, innovative practices, and ongoing research activities.

Sankar Foundation doctors toured various facilities, including operation theatres and patient service areas, gaining insights into SNC's systems for managing high patient volumes efficiently. Our doctors held a round table meeting with various HODs of Sadguru Netralaya and held fruitful

Our doctors visit to Sadguru Operation
Theatres and their campus.



discussions on best practices, patient care initiatives etc.

As part of the knowledge-sharing initiative, Dr. Raveendra delivered a presentation to SNC's doctors and staff on the latest developments in glaucoma management. The visit under-scored the importance of mutual learning, adoption of best practices, and strategies to effectively handle the large influx of patients that both institutions encounter in their mission to provide quality eye care.

**Healthy eyes make the
world a more vibrant place.**