

*Editorial*

From the Editor's Desk

***Adapting To COVID-19 Times***

***“The art of life is a constant readjustment to our surroundings” — Kakuzo Okakura***

Novel coronavirus was detected in December 2019 and since then it has wreaked havoc on the human race all over the world. With total lockdown by several countries to put a stop to the virus spread, the impact on fronts including health (physical as well as mental), economic and social has been enormous. The only redeemable grace is the much needed respite for nature, earth and natural resources. It has also put a stop to the frenzied consumerism by humans though it seems to be temporary effect.

Healthcare workers (HCWs) are not only at the forefront for fighting the disease, they also are at a great risk of contracting the disease themselves as has been seen all over the world in last few months. Ophthalmologists because of their close contact with patients, are at a particular risk for contracting the disease. This brings the dual responsibility on the shoulders of Ophthalmologist: protecting self along with providing unrestricted and uncompromised services to all those requiring it. Continuously rising Covid-19 cases in India, with 100,000 reported in last fortnight itself, makes it even more pertinent and challenging. The situation is further worsened by limited testing in India (as compared to other countries) and various state governments placing further restrictions on testing. This calls for making special changes in our daily routine.

With no definitive treatment/vaccine in sight in near future, every patient should be considered Corona positive and a new set of “Universal precautions” should be followed. While several bodies have issued such guidelines, they are still evolving as we gain more and more knowledge about the virus and its modes of spread. All the patients and relatives coming to the hospital must undergo screening, should wear protective mask and must maintain social distancing. The ophthalmologist should wear the recommended personal protective equipment and all the instrument/equipment may be used in way to minimize contact between the patients. Operation theatre requires additional measures as the contact with the patient is for a longer period, making the chances of spread more likely. A regular disinfection of the hospital premises and equipment is recommended.

Overburdened healthcare services in our country are already feeling the heat of Covid-19. Underprivilege and poor in our country rely on scanty and overstrained public hospitals many of which have been converted to dedicated Covid-19 hospitals. Even for those who can afford private sector, the cost is going to go up remarkably because of all these factors. It is therefore up to each one of us to adapt quickly and give our best. Meanwhile it is good time for the Government of India to introspect and start working towards strengthening of public health care in India.

***“Healthy citizens are the greatest asset any country can have” — Winston Churchill***

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7869/djo.535>