



# Pandemic Impact Report

## 2021



Christian Medical College Vellore



# From our Director



The COVID-19 pandemic has been a time of fear, sickness and tragedy across the globe. We have lost loved ones. The whole world has been irrevocably changed by death, lockdown, isolation and the shattering effect on local economies.

But it is **in the darkest night that we see the brightest stars**. During these crises-filled months, we have seen the immense power of the human spirit in the tremendous compassion, courage and commitment of our frontline healthcare workers. Dedicated teams rose up to the challenge and shone brightly all over the world. We collaborated with Government, local communities and donor partners to give our patients the best possible care.

This report captures our experiences and key learnings. Thank you for joining us on this remarkable journey. We look forward to your continued support and solidarity.

Dr. J. V. Peter  
Director, CMC Vellore

# Pandemic Preparedness

## the first wave

From March 2020 onwards, we started to receive Covid positive patients in our hospital. All other medical work, apart from emergencies, came to a grinding halt. The lockdown meant that many of our patients were stranded in Vellore far away from their homes. We reached out to them with counselling, food and travel support.



There was an atmosphere of apprehension and fear. COVID-19 was an unknown entity, a new emerging virus. Our team developed protocols on how to manage and treat the disease, how to stay protected and safe while caring for our patients. Our ICU teams had to be enlarged and trained in COVID management. Our frontline workers were equipped with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). We expanded our capacity for handling the large number of COVID patients by opening Intensive Care Units (ICUs) and COVID wards.

# Pandemic Preparedness

## the first wave

Help poured in - friends and well-wishers reached out to support us. Donors generously contributed gifts like PPE and medical equipment. A COVID Care fund was set up to subsidise the costs for poor patients. Our community outreach teams started innovative interventions to support local patients who needed medicines, supplies and food.

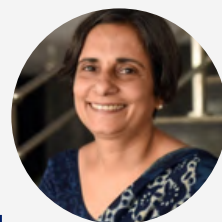
Distance Education, Nursing, Hospital Infection Control Committee and Staff Training departments worked on COVID education, notably collaborating with our network of rural mission hospitals in India and committed partners.

Our work was recognized with awards and accolades. Faculty members have served on state and national level committees, providing expert advice. These months in 2020 turned out to be a time of intense preparation. We learned how to function in a new and changed 'normal'.



**Dr. Priya Abraham**

Professor of Virology & CMC alumna, was invited to be Director of the National Institute of Virology (ICMR-NIV) just before the first COVID-19 cases were reported in India.



**Dr. Gagandeep Kang**

Professor of Gastro-intestinal Sciences & CMC alumna, is an expert on viral infections and vaccines. She is a member of several international committees, WHO working groups and advisor to state and international Governments.

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### **ICMR COVID-19 Rapid Response team & National Task Force**

Dr. J.P. Muliylil, retired Professor of Community Health, & CMC alumnus  
Dr. O.C. Abraham, Professor of Medicine & ID, CMC Vellore

### **Supreme Court appointed 12-member National Task Force to facilitate public health response to COVID**

Dr. J.V. Peter, Director & Intensivist, CMC Vellore  
Dr. Dr. Gagandeep Kang, Professor of GI Sciences, CMC Vellore

### **World Health Organisation COVID-19 Respiratory Support Working Group**

Dr. DJ Christopher, Professor of Pulmonary Medicine, CMC Vellore



# The darkest nights

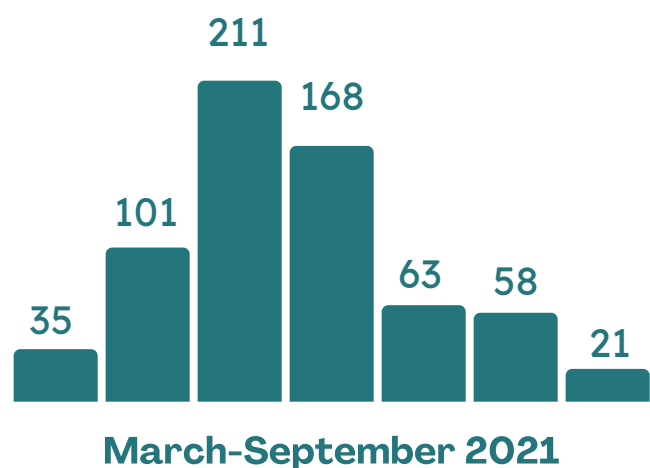
## the second wave

“If the first wave of the pandemic was like a rising tide, the second wave was like a devastating tsunami,” says Dr. Binila, Medical ICU specialist. “Just as we were beginning to relax, thinking things were under control, the second wave hit.”

The number of cases rose rapidly. Many patients were younger and severely affected by the virus. More patients required Oxygen support or ICU care. The waiting list for ICU beds was overwhelming. The pain of losing patients was heartbreaking. The agony of families connecting with their dying loved one by video call was devastating.

### Patients admitted in CMC's COVID ICUs

Of 656 Medical ICU patients, 455 survived the second wave. We remember our sisters and brothers who lost their lives in the pandemic. They were gone too soon.



# The brightest stars

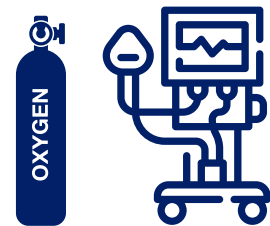
## the second wave

At the peak of the pandemic, we had allocated 1,150 beds for COVID patients, which included over 200 ICU beds. We opened a floor of our 'under-construction' hospital at Kannigapuram campus for COVID care. We had to ensure that the infrastructure, equipment, oxygen supply and human resources were optimal to provide the ICU care needed over many months.

The second wave was of epic proportions and we worked together as one large team. We had partnerships with Government and local communities, donors, well-wishers and collaborators. Despite the constraints, we ensured high quality care for our patients at an affordable cost.

# 537

**Life-saving oxygen concentrators & cylinders donated by friends & well-wishers**



**Home care for patients on a nurse-run monitored home-isolation program for patients with milder infections**

# 4029



**UDHAVI - a free medical advisory helpline run in collaboration with our dedicated local medical practitioners and partners for patients in Vellore and neighbouring districts**

# The brightest stars

## the second wave

Kannan is a tailor from Vellore. His wife Thangam is a cancer patient. She is weak and struggles to walk. Kannan takes care of her. He brings her regularly to CMC for treatment. During the pandemic, Kannan lost all his customers. The family was struggling to make ends meet. Kannan's worse fears came true when Thangam fell ill with fever and tested positive for COVID-19.

Kannan was distraught, "Her body is weak from cancer and her chance of survival extremely slim. And how will we pay for the medical bills?" Thankfully, Thangam made good progress. At the end of two weeks, she was ready to be discharged from the ward.



Thanks to the generous support of donors and well-wishers like you, we were able to subsidise her treatment costs. Kannan folds his hands in gratitude for Thangam's recovery and for the support he had to make it through this difficult time.



**3522** Individuals and organisations blessed us with generous contributions. **THANK YOU** for your kindness in these times of crisis.



# The brightest stars

## the second wave



Setting up COVID ICUs in our newly constructed hospital at Kannigapuram campus

Patients pouring into our hospitals



Listen to our frontline healthcare workers share their experiences.



Inside the COVID ICU



Dr. Binila, Medical ICU specialist shares her team's experience during the second wave



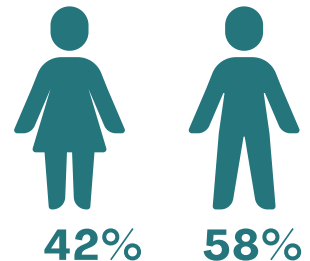
# COVID Count

March 2020 - September 2021

Tested **102,613**

23% positivity

Positives **23,634**



**16,603** Admitted in CMC



**2,245** Intensive Care

**1,150** COVID beds at peak including 202 ICU beds

Vaccine doses **47,071**



Manna Meals **40,641**

Healthy meals provided free to poor patients



Patient Subsidy **₹49.8** crores

For poor patients who could not afford treatment

# Vaccinate Vellore!

## campaign

Realising the importance of vaccination in preventing COVID-19, we began our vaccination campaign in January 2021. By September 2021, over 47,000 doses of COVID vaccines were administered. We started with frontline healthcare workers and vulnerable groups and expanded to all above 18 years of age.

Community outreach teams have gone to villages, collaborating with local Government, serving those communities who have difficulty accessing immunization. One third of doses were given free of cost.



Vaccination Awareness & camps in rural Vellore



# Looking Ahead

Even as the second wave subsides, CMC continues to be a designated COVID diagnosis and treatment centre. We have around 80 beds in Wards and ICUs designated for COVID patients.

During the pandemic, many patients were not able to access medical care. This huge backlog of patients is now coming to CMC in large numbers. Our challenge is to respond to this despite current economic hardships. Our existing OPDs and wards are stretched beyond capacity. We are completing a new Hospital in Kannigapuram campus to help us address this need more effectively. This 1,500-bed quaternary centre, with a state-of-the-art Level 1 Trauma Care centre, will cater to accident victims and patients needing care for cancer, heart diseases, diabetes and organ transplants. Pandemic conditions permitting, we hope to inaugurate this hospital in early 2022.

**Thank you for accompanying us on this extraordinary journey through difficult times. We invite you to continue to partner with CMC Vellore in future.**

**General Ward Cot**  
for one patient: ₹40,000/-

**Critical Care Equipment**  
for one ICU bed : ₹22 lakhs

**Operation Theatre**  
with medical equipment: Rs1.5cr

Donations of ₹10,000/- onwards will be acknowledged on our donor wall. Other naming opportunities are available.

# Acknowledgements

We place on record our immense gratitude to the thousands of people who crossed our paths, virtual and in-person, during the pandemic.

- Patients and their families
- Government and technical partners
- Generous Individuals, Organisations and Companies
- Friends of Vellore (FOVs) globally
- Overseas friends and well-wishes
- CMC Alumni and retired staff, staff and students



Photo credits: CMC Vellore - special thanks to Dr. Latif Rajesh Johnson

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