

# Vellore News

CMCH Vellore Web site:  
Australian FOV web site:  
SA FOV email:

<http://www.cmch-vellore.edu>  
<http://www.australianfov.net.au>  
[safriendsofvellore@gmail.com](mailto:safriendsofvellore@gmail.com)

## SA Friends of Vellore AGM

**7pm Friday 21st October, 2022**  
Rosefield Uniting Church  
2 Carlton St, Highgate

### Speaker: Peter Kirk OAM

Peter will be sharing about his involvement in South Pacific School Aid which, for 50 years, has shipped donated books and school equipment globally to schools and locations in need. SPSA is a volunteer group passionate about the importance of education in improving standards of living.



Supper provided - supporters and friends of CMC Vellore are all invited!

Oct 2022

SA FOV AGM

President  
SA FOV

New Director  
CMCH Vellore

### From the President, South Australian Friends of Vellore Dr Renjy Nelson

COVID 19 cases are on the decline and we do hope that this signifies the end of the pandemic. The pandemic brought about great pain, separation from loved ones and loss of loved ones but also challenged the way we conduct affairs. CMC was no exception. The lockdowns led to significant loss of income but this didn't stop the institution from continuing to deliver face to face and virtual care, innovate and educate and support its network of mission hospitals across the country and overseas. Meticulous planning from the beginning and Prayer and Faith enabled CMC to tide over the most difficult phases of the pandemic. CMC initiated India's own 'Living Guidelines' to facilitate evidence-based treatment of patients with COVID-19 in India. The New Hospital building was opened prematurely to manage the hundreds of patients with COVID 19 who had nowhere else to go.

Once again Prayer and Faith helped them to overcome the financial hardship they were put in with donations from philanthropists and fund raising efforts through Friends of Vellore Organisations from around the world. FOV Australia is grateful to all of you for your generous contributions to help CMC to come through this crisis. We have not had our annual fund raising dinners for the last two years. However, over \$600,000 was raised through your direct contributions. Money sent from Australia was allocated to the institution's vaccination programme where CMC vaccinated Vellore town and purchase of additional equipment to cater to the additional patients seen on account of COVID-19. ...cont'd

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Remember to let us know if you change your email or postal address.

### Upcoming Events At A Glance

**7pm, Fri 21<sup>st</sup> Oct 2022**  
SA FOV AGM  
Rosefield Uniting Church

### South Australian Friends of Vellore Committee

President: Dr Renjy Nelson, Vice President: Kumar Arpudaswamy

Secretary: Luisa Mozzi, Treasurer: Tijo Thomas, Editor: Gary Fielke, [safriendsofvellore@gmail.com](mailto:safriendsofvellore@gmail.com)

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Australia's donation has also gone towards the purchase of a mobile eye unit.

Dr Vikram Mathew has been appointed as the new director of CMC Vellore. He has taken over from Dr John Victor Peters who led the institution through a very difficult period and on behalf of SA FOV I'd like to thank him for all his work during this time and we wish him all the best ahead. We wish Dr Vikram Mathews God's blessing as he takes over the reins of CMC. Last year also saw the signing of an MoU between CMC Vellore and Adelaide University. This will pave the way for collaborative research, teaching and curriculum development and exchange programmes. The Presentations meeting was held at Rosefield Uniting Church in May and Dr Boopalan Ramamswamy and Dr Amit Tirke spoke at the meeting. The AGM for 2022 will be held on 21st October 2022 at the Rosefield Uniting Church and I look forward to seeing you there.

### CMC's First Successful Robotic Surgery



The much awaited Da Vinci Xi – Surgical Robot for multi-disciplinary use was installed in Christian Medical College Vellore on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2022 in OR 3. The robotic programme began with a brief prayer and the first robotic surgery was successfully performed on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022. In the first month the Da Vinci Xi – Surgical Robot performed 17 complex surgeries namely radical cystectomies, radical prostatectomies, partial nephrectomies and colectomies for cancer. To date, three units have

been fully trained to use the robot and three more units are in the process of training. The initiation of robotic programme has been a success so far and CMC Vellore strives to run one of the most cost efficient and high volume robotic services in the country as per its “Both And” philosophy. The institution is thankful to the administrative team, intuitive surgical team, doctors, nurses and paramed-



### Dr. Vikram Mathews Director, CMC Vellore

Dr. Vikram Mathews has been appointed as the Director of CMC Vellore succeeding Dr. J. V. Peter who will be completing his 5-year term this month. Dr. Mathews will take up the position on 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2022. He is currently the Professor of the Department of Haematology at CMC Vellore.

He was born on 21 March 1966 in Bangalore. He grew up and did his schooling in same city. His family are members of the Church of South India's (CSI) East Parade Church in Bangalore.

He entered CMC, Vellore as an undergraduate student in 1985 sponsored by his Dioceses. After graduation, he continued his postgraduate studies at Vellore. He completed his MD in General Medicine in 1996 and DM in Clinical Haematology in February 2001. He went to USA for further studies. He was a post-doctoral fellow in Stem Cell Biology at Washington University, St Louise, MO, USA for 2 years (2001 – 03) following which he was a Bone Marrow Transplant Fellow for one year at the same university. When he returned to Vellore, he was appointed as an Associate Professor in the Department of Haematology and has been an integral part of the department since then.



During his student days he excelled academically, being awarded with many accolades including best outgoing student (UG as well as PG). He was also an outstanding sportsman representing the college in field hockey and football. *...cont'd*

Tax deductible donations to CMCH can be made online at: <http://australianfov.net.au/donations/>

Simply and easily make a donation to the work of the Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore.

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As a clinical Haematologist he is well respected in his field not only in India but worldwide. He has authored chapters for 5 textbooks. He has been involved in 155 articles published in reputed international journals. His areas of interest are Myeloid Malignancies and Allogeneic Stem cell Transplantation. CMC Vellore is in the forefront in research activities in the above fields. He has received many international awards for his contributions to his speciality.

Dr. Vikram has been part of the administrative team over the past few years. He was the Associate Director – Administration (2017–21) before taking over as the Associate Director of Ranipet campus (Kannigapuram) early this year.

He is married to Dr. Urmi Ghosh, who is his batch mate. Urmi is a paediatrician at CMC, Vellore. They have two children.

The Australian Vellore board wish to congratulate Dr. Vikram on his appointment and may God guide him and his team during his tenure.

## ENT Community Care, Continuing the Legacy

The Lady Willingdon Hospital founded in 1935, is a fifty five bedded hospital situated in Manali, at an altitude of 6500 feet in the Kullu District of Himachal Pradesh. True to their mission statement; 'Loving God and Loving our Neighbor', the hospital provides affordable health care to a population of over 64,060 from Kullu to as far as the Lahaul and Spiti districts. Lady Willingdon Hospital at Manali has been partnering with Christian Medical College Vellore since there are no resident ENT doctors in this hospital.

The ENT outreach work at this mission hospital was started by Late Dr. George Ani Mathew in 2010 who believed "if patients cannot access you, you should access them", and made many solo trips to Manali to conduct ENT camps. Since then, the Department of ENT and his colleagues have supported this endeavor regularly. From 2016 Dr. Suma Susan Mathews took up the charge to continue the legacy with the ENT outreach work in this hospital. She has mentored many young ENT surgeons to conduct the camp in this hospital every year.



This year a team lead by Dr. Suma with Dr. Blessi travelled to Manali and conducted a camp from 13th June 2022 to 15th June 2022. They could cater to around 230 outpatients and were ably supported by Ms. Tirza, Audiology, Speech and Language Pathologist. Ms. Tirza is a CMC alumnus who is working there as part of her service obligation after completing the BASLP course at CMC Vellore. She has successfully conducted the following during these three days of camp :

- 49 pure tone audiometry
- 50 OPD procedures
- 15 minor procedures in operation theatre
- 5 major procedures under general anesthesia

The hospital is equipped with an operating microscope and rigid endoscopes with camera and monitors, required for performing general ENT surgical procedures.



Dr. Blessi, says "We were greatly encouraged by the enthusiasm and the excitement of the staff and warm welcome accorded by Dr. Philip Alexander and his team at Lady Willingdon Hospital, Manali. Patients travelled long distances to get the appropriate medical treatment and the trust they have in this mission hospital was heartening. We were blessed to see their motto of *Loving God and Loving Neighbor*, in action".

The Department of ENT continues to care for patients in the community in various sites LCECU, RUHSA, CHAD and Jawadi Hills. They render services at Asha Kiran in Odisha, Kothagiri Hills (KMF), Kodaikanal hills (Van Allen Hospital), Christian Fellowship Hospital, Oddanchatram and hospitals like EHA and CIHSR, Dimapur to train develop ENT care.

"Not to be Ministered Unto, but to Minister" is not just a motto, but a life style. May this Spirit of Christ enable us to continue the legacy to be a witness of His healing Ministry.

CMC Newslines , July 11, 2022