



Paul Harrison Award 2011

Dr Solomon S Chelliah, of the batch of 1973, was sponsored for MBBS by the inter diocesan Medical Board of CSI Karnataka. In 1980 he was posted as Medical Officer in the CSI Basel Mission Hospital in Gadag-Betgeri, North Karnataka where he continues to work till today. He was sponsored for MD General Medicine from the same diocese in 1983 and returned to take over as the Medical Superintendent of the hospital in 1986.

The CSI Basel Mission was founded in 1902 by the Basel Missionaries from Switzerland and Germany - many of whom had given up their lives fighting epidemics of cholera and plague. It was the only major hospital in the whole district. After the missionaries left in the early '70s and foreign help dwindled, the hospital went through a major crisis and was on the verge of closure. Several private hospitals had come up in the town and the hospital could not cope with the competition due to lack of infrastructure and funds. In 1986, this 60-bedded hospital and the staff residences were in bad need of renovation. As the patient load slowly increased, the income generated was used to renovate wards. New equipment was purchased, predominantly by locally generated funds. Eight new general and private wards were constructed, adding 80 beds to the hospital. This was followed by a modern intensive care unit with a central oxygen supply, central suction, central compressor, monitors and ventilators - the only one of its kind in Gadag town. The first dialysis unit of the town was also set up with the help of an American tourist who was a patient in the hospital.

Under the guidance of a paediatrician, a modern neonatal ICU with 17 beds was started. The existing operation theatre was renovated and two modern theatres inaugurated a year ago. Thanks to a full-time surgeon who has joined from Vellore, the number of surgeries has significantly increased. Laparoscopic, Orthopaedic and Paediatric surgeries are now carried out in this small rural Hospital.

A new Pharmacy block was constructed. The Laboratory has been upgraded with a Blood Gas Analyzer, Semi Automatic analyzer, electrolyte analyzer and cell counter. The X Ray unit has been upgraded and emergency ultrasounds are being carried out. A CT Scan was installed three years ago. A tele-medicine link was provided by CMC, Vellore. Staff residences were constructed. Although the hospital lacks a full time gynaecologist, this work is carried out by visiting consultants. At present the hospital is the largest, best- equipped and busiest hospital in the whole district. The charges are kept subsidized by the heavy load of patients with Doctor Solomon seeing about 130 out patients every day, a lot of which is charity work.

About 15 yrs ago, a residential polio home was constructed in the hospital, administered by the KND with Dr Solomon as honorary manager. All corrective surgeries are done free of cost by doctors from the hospital. Donations by well wishers are used for providing walking aids and travelling aids to the children who attend schools and colleges nearby. The Austrian church funds the maintenance of the home and their education till the children are able to fend for themselves. Dr Solomon is also the honorary manager for the Basel Mission Orphanage administered by the KND which is over 100 years old.

About five years ago there was a major fire accident. The office was gutted and equipment worth lakhs of rupees was lost. Fortunately there was no injury to human life. Following this, the electric system had to be rewired and underground cables laid. While this was being done, a large eighth century Nandi idol was unearthed in the hospital campus and the idol was donated to the local museum.

In 2009 the President of India, H.E. Dr. Abdul Kalam paid an unscheduled visit to the hospital. He was very impressed, and later made a statement in his news letter that this hospital should be made an example for self sustaining projects in rural areas where local people can have access to affordable medical care.

For his unwavering commitment and unbroken service to the underserved people of Gadag-Betgeri CMC is proud to present the Paul Harrison Award to

Dr. Solomon S. Chelliah

DIRECTOR

Vellore

14.11.2011

PRINCIPAL