

Celebrating the World Sight Day

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Opinion

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The world witnessed the world sight day on Thursday, 12th of October, 2017 and celebrated this event with the prime focus on diabetics and their family. The rolling theme for this year's sight Day was 'Universal Eye Health' and the call to action this World Sight Day was 'Make Vision Count'. IAPB advocates for this day as the most important day for communicating the events related with eye health. This year the focus has been given to the patient's family, those who seldom get an eye exam, diabetics.

A study reported the prevalence of pre-diabetes: diabetes in Nepal to be 19.5: 9.5% [1]. WHO South-East Asia Region Prevalence of diabetes has projected prevalence from 4,36,000 in 2000 to 1,328, 000 in 2030 [2]. The Nepal Diabetes Association (NDA) had reported an affection of 15% among people aged 20 years and older living in urban areas. Among people aged 40 years and older in urban areas, this number climbed to 19% Studies have shown prevalence of overweight and obesity in certain sections of the population to be as high as 32.9% and 7.2%, respectively[3]. Nepal is also facing the consequences of urban lifestyle leading to obesity and metabolic syndrome. Looking back at this event on our calendar, we, the ophthalmologist and eye health workers are lingered with a question about have we celebrated this day effectively?

We would like to recount the events of this day and as an ophthalmologist of a developing economics and serving the people in the eastern region of Nepal about how we celebrated this day. The data reveals a large population at risk but truly it might only represent a tip of an iceberg, the affected population might still be unaware of their metabolic entity. And that with diabetics having a routine eye examination is another story in our part of this world.

Involving the endocrinologist or internist where the patients were encountered at first, is our prime concern from where we can acquire the affected population for a scheduled eye examination. Hence raising awareness among those physicians of our surrounding medical fraternity is our area of interest. Fulfilling that purpose we organized a CME program focusing on eye and diabetic changes and asking the physician to send the previously diagnosed or newly diagnosed diabetics for screening the diabetic retinopathy and in-fact it proved beneficial and we got plenty of patients referred to us by our colleagues.

Raising the voice in the community is another step where we decided to organize a morning rally in the following day. The rally involved a robust participation from the health workers, community leaders, members of society and health enthusiasts. This rally ultimately merged into an eye screening camp setup in a city centre grabbing the attention of many. Active involvement of community members proved effective in terms of congregation of crowd and spreading the message of importance of eye screening. A role play was done which seemed to leave a lasting memory among the audiences was another constructive infotainment approach by our team.

In our hospital the intended message was exhibited through banners and posters in the entrance and prime places. An ophthalmologist allocated for a week long screening of diabetics with priority to elderly was conducted in our hospital.

At the end of this programme a blessing from the patients was all it mattered the most. These activities gives a representative example of a day in a peripheral setup like ours where we all think that we celebrated this

year's happening day for all of us eye health workers which we call " World Sight Day"..

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