

Dr Praveen Vashist:

Dr Praveen Vashist is presently holding the position as Professor and Head, Community Ophthalmology, Dr. RP Centre for Ophthalmic Sciences, All Indian Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi.

As head of Community Ophthalmology at the apex ophthalmic institute of the country, he has been instrumental in developing models for community outreach services and strengthening epidemiological research & training in the field of community eye care.

He has developed a successful model of integrating primary eye care in 15 urban health centres of the Delhi Government. In addition, he involved in organizing outreach camps for screening cataract and other blinding conditions in rural areas and ensuring free cataract surgeries to poor patients; school based vision screening in schools and dedicated camps for screening of diabetic retinopathy, childhood blindness and glaucoma. With these efforts, community outreach services through the department have been extended to more than 100,000 people per year. I developed an operational model for utilizing ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activists) - community based volunteers for provision of primary eye care in rural areas. Based on the model and continuous advocacy, National Health Mission, Delhi government has made provisions for providing incentives to ASHAs for referring patients with cataract and refractive errors.

He has been a Principal Investigator of 19 research and community eye care projects, most significant of them being the Sightsavers Vision Delhi Project on Primary Eye Care Services in Urban Slums, LSH&TM Epidemiology of Age-related eye disease in India (INDGEN) study, Multi-centric-ICMR Study on Impact of Global Warming and UV radiation on Ocular Health and DST study on Awareness and Health Seeking Practices for Eye Diseases in Urban Slums.

He has 80 publications in international and national peer-reviewed journals and also supervised 15 research scholars including five PhD scholars, ten post-graduates and one WHO Fellow in community ophthalmology.