

## FOV Qld Chairperson's Report 2024 (Sep 2023 - August 2024)

I am honoured to present the Chairperson's report for Friends of Vellore Queensland Branch (FOV Qld), detailing our activities over the past year. Our commitment to supporting Christian Medical College (CMC) Vellore has been steadfast, and it is with pleasure that I share our collective progress and future plans.

### 1. Overview and Mission

FOV Qld remains dedicated to fostering support for CMC Vellore, an institution known for its outstanding medical care, research, and educational programs. Our mission is to enhance the resources available to CMC Vellore, especially the underprivileged, ensuring that the institution continues to deliver high-quality healthcare to this population.

### 2. Key Achievements

#### a. FOV Qld AGM 2022

This was held on 11 November 2023 at Nazareth Lutheran Church. Dr Alka Ganesh, Professor of Medicine, alumnus and former HOD of Medicine at CMC Vellore, was our speaker. Prof Ganesh worked in CMCH for 30 years, and realised early on that good primary care was the answer to improved health. She was involved in the development of the Departments of Family Medicine, Geriatrics, and Medical Education at CMC, Vellore. She continues to advocate for high-quality primary care and is herself involved in Geriatrics and training of health care workers in Coimbatore, India, where she now lives.

The FOV Qld audit was completed and available at the AGM. Thank you to Jason O'Connor CPA, our auditor.

The new Committee was elected at the AGM:

**Honorary President:** Sharon Thomas

**Honorary Vice President:** Bella George

**Honorary Secretary:** Shoma Baidya

**Honorary Treasurer:** Richard Caitens

**Honorary Newsletter Editor:** Neeta Wilfred

**Honorary Committee members:**

Janet Evans

Neeta Wilfred

George Jacob

Gwen Ward

Gwenda Spencer

Barbara Zappala

Vasant Ravikumar

Daniel James

Chellam Kirubakaran

Grace Thomas

**Retiring committee members:** Belinda Gledhill, Ruth Schneider

#### b. Fundraising Dinner



We successfully organised a fundraising dinner on 02/09/2023 – we were pleased to have a sold-out venue. Numbers were limited by capacity at the hall we used. Thanks to the hard work of our committee members and volunteers, we had an enjoyable evening at which



Professor Kanta Subbarao from the Peter Doherty Institute in Melbourne spoke. Prof Subbarao was appointed Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Reference and Research on Influenza in 2016. Kanta received her M.B.B.S. from Christian Medical College, Vellore.

Entertainment was provided by Mansfield Melody Makers (community choir for which our committee member Gwen Ward is the accompanist), and a Gujarati dance group.

### **c. Project Support**

Our contributions have supported numerous projects at CMC Vellore. Notable among these is individual donations towards PTP (person-to-person scheme), student scholarships, and Scudder documentary. Non designated funds went towards additional AVB projects like travel fellowships, Jawadhi Hills medical outreach centre and a new hybrid operation theatre, which is currently under construction and hopefully to be completed by year end.



### **d. Community Engagement**

We have expanded our network of supporters and increased community engagement through newsletters and direct contact. These efforts have not only raised awareness about CMC Vellore's mission but also fostered a stronger connection between our organisation and the local community.

## **3. Financial Overview**

Our financial position remains strong. The detailed financial report, which will be presented separately, reflects our prudent management of resources and demonstrates our commitment to transparency and accountability. We continue to be grateful for the unwavering support of our donors and sponsors.

## **4. Challenges and Opportunities**



While we celebrate our achievements, we acknowledge the challenges we face, including evolving healthcare needs and attrition of our senior support base. We were very sad to lose two long-term and outstanding committee members, Ms Janet Evans and Rev John Hooper. Janet and John will be remembered for their unwavering support and regular attendance at committee meetings until illness and frailty prevented them for attending.

Challenges of attrition present opportunities for growth and we look for ways to increase collaboration with alumni of CMC Vellore and the community.



## **5. Looking Ahead**

As we look to the future, our focus will be on expanding our donor base, supporting specific programs that are put forward by CMC Vellore. We are committed to continuing our support and making a meaningful impact in the lives of those CMC Vellore serves. This year our fund rising event is planned to re a lunch on 09/11/2024, held before out AGM meeting. The change form dinner to lunch is based on feedback from many of our senior friends.

## **6. Acknowledgements**

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to our dedicated committee members, volunteers, donors, and partners. Notable amongst these is the Nazareth Lutheran Church, where we hold out committee meetings and pan to have this year's fund-raising lunch.

Each person's unwavering support and tireless efforts are the backbone of our success. A special thank you to every committee member.

## **Conclusion**

In closing, I am inspired by the collective efforts of everyone involved with Friends of Vellore. Together, we are making a difference and supporting the vital work of CMC Vellore. Let us continue to work together with passion and dedication, striving to enhance the well-being of those in need and advance the mission of CMC Vellore.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sharon Thomas

18/08/2024

Chairperson

Friends of Vellore Qld Branch