



## **World Sight Day, Walkathon, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017**

**World Sight Day** celebration this year by Optometry Council of India was on a mega scale. Eye care awareness walks were conducted in 5 cities. It commenced in Pune on October 2nd 2017, followed by Bangalore on 12th October, Ahmadabad on 13th October, Chennai 15th October, and culminated in Kolkata on 22nd October. Along with such awareness walks, radio talk shows on myopia and awareness on need for eye care was aired on 12th October 2017 in cities all over India. World Sight Day and awareness walks have become synonymous with optometrists ever since OCI commenced organizing such events on a yearly basis. Apart from the walkathon, local associations also performed eye screening camps, and held discussion forums and awareness activities in general hospitals.

At the outset OCI would like to thank all the sponsors for making this mega event possible. Without their support an event of this magnitude would not have been possible. OCI would like to thank Alcon India, Cooper Vision India for their support to walkathons in Pune, Ahmadabad and Kolkata. Mr. Amod Gogate, optometrist from Pune also supported the walkathon in these three cities.

Essilor India supported OCI in walkathons organized in Bangalore and Chennai. Essilor also supported the radio city FM talk show aired on 12th October 2017.

OCI printed awareness banners, T shirts for participants and also refreshments for the participants were provided. To draw attention of the public, T shirts were printed in bright colours: Green: Pune, Ahmadabad and Kolkata, Blue: Chennai and Bangalore. (Please refer to pictures).

OCI also printed hand outs about optometry as a profession, which was handed over to the public during the rallies (please refer to the pamphlet copy below). 2500 optometrists participated totally on all these 5 locations and over 2000 pamphlets were Awareness was generated among the public by way of slogans, pamphlets, banners etc.

**Based on the listenership of the FM radios and public attention at these rallies, it is estimated that awareness was created for over 1,00,000 people.**

### **City Reports**

#### **Pune: 2nd October 2017**

Mahatma Gandhi once said, “an eye for an eye makes the whole world blind”. Remembering the father of the nation on this day, the Eye Care Professionals and Optometrists across Pune paid their homage in the form of a walk starting from Balgandharv Rangmandir and ending at Fergusson College Main Gate.



## Bangalore: 12th October 2017.

The walkathon in Bangalore was exciting as it was held on the same day as World Sight Day. What an apt place to commence the walk “Freedom Park”, cause as optometrist we provide freedom from avoidable blindness to the common people.

The walk was flagged off by Essilor CEO Mr. Shivkumar and COO Mr. Ramachandran. The walk was supported by the Karnataka Optometry Association in which 350 optometrists participated which included, students, educators and Essilor staff participated in the walk. Students from Sankara College of optometry, Nethradama College, Naseema College and Vasan Institute participated in the walk. Despite the walk commencing in the early hours 7:00am, the youngsters were enthusiastic and had also brought placards which conveyed messages on eye care, both in english and vernacular languages. The passers-by got educated in eye care and in optometry as a profession. Students helped public who could not understand the english pamphlet through translation.



## Ahmadabad, 13th October 2017.

Nagar school of Optometry under umbrella of Nagri Eye Research foundation, with the support of Optometry Council of India, celebrated World Sight day on 13th Oct 2017. The day began in presence of Mayor Shri. Gautam Shah, standing committee chairman, Shri. Pravin Patel, DYMC department of health Shri Dr. Usha Vyas, trusty Shri. Jayanti Bhai Patel of Nagar Chasmaghar, Corporater: Vandanaben, secretary NERF Dr. Tejas Desai and principal (NSO) Dr. Reema Raval at 7.00 am. The Honorable Mayor enlightened all with his talk to the group of around 400 people, which included different stakeholders of eye care fraternity and optometry students.

The various colleges in Gujarat had traveled to Ahmadabad to participate in the event and spread the message: "make vision count". Harijyot College of optometry, Navsari; Bharatimaiya College of Optometry, Surat; Dept. of Optometry, CIPS Changa and Nagar School of optometry, Ahmadabad participated in the walkathon along with practitioners and educators.

Honorable Mayor and Jayanti Bhai Patel flagged off walkathon at 7.20am which covered areas of Mithakhali cross road, CG Road, Panchvati Cross road, Law garden ended at NSO, which constituted roughly 4-5 km of walk.

Later in the day different groups of optometrists along with optometry faculties visited to differ wards of V. S. Hospital, L.G. Hospital, AMC Met medical college, NHL Medical College to spread awareness and message of significance of eye care, prevention, and burden on society of avoidable blindness. This was a very unique initiative and it needs to be applauded, as hospitals are regarded as an institute of health care and having to spread the message of vision care in such institutes through optometrists was really a great initiative.

A poster competition was arranged to provoke enthusiastic minds of optometry students where participation of 40 posters was presented. Eminent faculties judged poster for theme, content and artwork and 5 best were awarded best posters sponsored by NSO.





## Chennai, 15th October 2017.

'World Sight Day' the annual event emphasizing the need for awareness on eye care and focus on blindness and vision impairment came live on the bright Sunday morning of October 15, 2017 with Dr. P.P. Santanam, 'Father of occupational optometry in India' and the first and former Principal of the Elite School of Optometry flagging off the 'Walkathon-2017' organized by the 'Optometric Association of Tamil Nanbargal' (OATN) with the support of OCI. Nearly 1000 Practicing Optometrists, Head of Optometry schools from Tamil Nadu, Optometry students took part in this annual event. Ms. Poongothai, The President - OATN welcomed the gathering and also introduced the Chief Guest Dr. P.P. Santhanam. Dr. P.P. Santanam addressed the gathering and emphasized such annual events and role of community eye care. Also thanked Dr S. S. Badrinath for introducing Four Year - Modern Optometry in India. The event came to an end with vote of thanks by organizing committee - OATN. During the vote of thanks the following organizations were acknowledged for their support for the walkathon 2017: Optometry Council of India (OCI), Indian Optometric Federation (IOF) and Association of Schools and College of Optometry (ASCO). OATN thanked all the industry sponsors and individual sponsors as well.

In addition to walkathon, OATN also organized an eye screening camp for school children and 1<sup>st</sup> time geriatric eye screening and counseling were given for the aged at various old age homes in various cities within Tamil Nadu. The geriatric vision screening of the OATN was another major highlight of the event. The Vision screening activities were conducted throughout the month of October 2017. Both the events were well received by the public.

1<sup>st</sup> time the Walkathon 2017 was well covered by all major news media both before and after the event. The details are listed below.

The Hindu - Tamil Newspaper on October 14, 2017

Daily Thanthi Next- English New Paper October 16, 2017

Times of India - English New Paper October 17, 2017

Dinamani - Tamil Newspaper on October 15 & 17, 2017.

The following web links for Photo galary:

1) <https://photos.app.goo.gl/f8kQiAPfPnBBXJ3s1>

2) <https://photos.app.goo.gl/5HoDT5NSy5NSG2l13>

3) <https://photos.app.goo.gl/r4QofhVf>



## **Kolkata, 22nd October 2017.**

It was a matter of pride for optometrists of Kolkata to organize the Walkathon in the City of Joy, to celebrate World Sight Day (WSD) and to conclude the month long Ceremony which was held all over the Country successfully, under aegis of OCI. It was truly magical to say the least, to see the entire country celebrating WSD to promote Optometry and the way all events were synchronized and stitched together by the OCI Team.

Kolkata was happy to carry the legacy of the performance of all other cities, with presence of 400 optometrists of West Bengal, including practitioners, educators and students in this walkathon. The Programme was flagged off by an eminent Lawyer turned Politician who also happens to be the local Councilor, Shri Baiswanor Chatterjee, at the starting point (Goal Park) and the Chairman of the Borough Committee of Kolkata Municipal Corporation.

It was a spectacle to watch, so many optometrists wearing green T- shirts, walking on the busy streets of Kolkata and interacting or communicating about eye care with the common man. The total length of the Walkathon route from Goal Park to Triangular Park, R.B. Avenue, was approximately 2.4 km.

It was also heartening to be able to get people from prominent media houses and film Industry, involved in the programme. Most of the Optometry Colleges, also took an active part by preparing placards with eye care information both in English and vernacular.

The walkathon was followed by an “open discussion session” at Sarat Sadan Hall, where all senior optometrist, faculties of optometry colleges and industry colleagues. They shared their views regarding growth and development of Optometry. Students were also encouraged to speak about the importance of building awareness regarding eyecare, attending eye screening camps and taking care of eyes on a yearly basis. The meeting concluded at 1:30pm with lunch. It was a great event and a pleasing experience for all optometrists as all of them had a sense of satisfaction and a smile at the end of the event, having contributed to eye care in a small way.





*Creating excellence in eye and vision care through optometry education and regulation*

**World Health Organisation (WHO) through World Council of Optometry (WCO) has classified Optometry as an Independent profession and NOT Allied or Paramedical!!**



World Health Organisation (WHO), through World Council of Optometry (WCO) defines Optometrists as health and eye care professionals who are licensed to practice the Science and art of eye care. Given that many systemic ailments first get detected through eye health, the role of optometrists as a health care professional also becomes crucial. An optometrist can diagnose and treat various eye ailments as per rules governing in their country. They also co-manage patients with other health care professionals as appropriate. Specialisations in optometry include low vision and rehabilitation, contact lenses, dispensing optics, occupational and environmental optometry, vision therapy and binocular vision management. Many optometrists are also involved in research and public eye health and participate in policy making.

Optometrist also play a vital role in community eye health programs. An optometrist not only helps one see, but, helps him see better.

**See your optometrist today to see the world better. After all "seeing is believing!"**

