

## Diary of an ophthalmology resident: Recollections from Post Graduate Institute, Chandigarh

Dear Editor,

I congratulate Dr. Santosh G. Honavar and the entire editorial board of the Indian Journal of Ophthalmology for publishing a comprehensive issue on Uveitis (IJO September 2020). I read an excellent editorial "Prof. Amod Gupta - Father of Uveitis in India."<sup>[1]</sup> The Editorial mentioned – "He is indeed the teacher of teachers as the students trained by him are now leading uveitis services in several prominent places in the world and continue to carry forward his legacy."

Prof. Amod Gupta inspired everyone who was trained by him and his excellent faculty members. His dedication to teaching, patient care, and research were commendable. As an ophthalmology resident of the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) Chandigarh during 1995–97, I was fortunate to be trained by Prof. Amod Gupta, Prof. Jagat Ram, Late Dr. J. S. Saini, Prof. Mangat R. Dogra, Dr. Ashok Sharma, Prof. Arun K. Jain, Dr. Kanwar Mohan, Prof. S.S. Pandav, and Prof. Usha Singh. I would like to elaborate on their dedication to teaching and research which I saw while pursuing residency from the PGIMER, Chandigarh. I joined junior residency in the Department of Ophthalmology, PGIMER Chandigarh in January 1995. My first posting was in the "Lens Clinic" of Prof. Jagat Ram (who was my thesis guide and now the director of PGIMER, Chandigarh). I was impressed by the punctuality, dedication, and clinical knowledge of all the faculty members. Prof. Amod Gupta was one of the first to reach the department in the morning and often the last to go after completing all the work.

Prof. Gupta wears several hats as a clinician, surgeon, researcher, administrator, mentor, visionary, and well-wisher of all residents and team of Advanced Eye Center, PGIMER, Chandigarh. While pursuing a residency in ophthalmology at PGIMER, Chandigarh, the discipline, timing to attend the OPD, ward, and OT, and strict schedule of teaching such as grand round, journal club, and staff clinical meet were a regular feature. An astute clinician, a voracious reader, Prof. Gupta was aware of the latest publications in almost all subspecialties in ophthalmology and always asked thought-provoking questions during the grand rounds and this ensured that residents prepared their cases very well. I remember preparing my first case for grand round- "tuberculosis of lacrimal gland," 1 month in advance by collecting (photocopying) all published articles, reading them, preparing slides (patient details, differential diagnosis, and management) organizing the clinical photos, images of investigations, etc. After completion of the grand round, I was encouraged by Dr. Ashok Sharma to write the manuscript and publish this case and this was my first international publication in the Journal of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus.<sup>[2]</sup>

During the grand round, Prof. Gupta would ask a lot of questions related to clinical examination, differential diagnosis, etc. He always emphasized on bedside (slit-lamp side) teaching in ophthalmology. He would always insist of systemic examination of the case when necessary, by emphasizing that in the multidisciplinary academic institutes like PGIMER, all residents are fortunate that we can communicate our concerns and challenges to our multidisciplinary colleagues without

any hesitation. During the grand round and case discussion, he cautioned residents and faculty members not to blindly follow the recommendations coming from the western world without any reference to our population, data, or experience. The insistence for publications, presentations during the conference state, national was enormous. I found that aspect difficult, but I passed out of PGIMER with 10 publications and enormous confidence for delivering scientific lectures, which I feel is very important in today's era. I sincerely thank all my teachers in retrospect for this aspect.

After completing ophthalmology residency in December 1997, I joined the fellowship at Storm Eye Institute, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC, USA in June 1998. I visited India in the year 2000 and met Prof Amod Gupta. He encouraged me to take a lecture to motivate residents. I was fortunate to visit my alma mater once again on March 18, 2013, during the Advanced Eye Center, PGIMER Foundation day to deliver a keynote address. We were fortunate to invite Prof. Gupta during the Rajasthan Ophthalmological Society (ROS) Conference at Kota in October 2016 to deliver the Prof Anila Khuteta Memorial Oration.

A passionate teacher and researcher, Prof. Gupta has published more than 350 original research papers in national and international journals and became one of the youngest Heads of the Department at the Post Graduate Institute, at the age of 39 years. The infrastructure in the eye department at that time was insufficient. The Advanced Eye Center, one of the premier eye institutes in the country, came into existence in 2006, due to Prof. Amod Gupta and faculty members' immense hard work and persistence.

Prof. Gupta's dedication to teaching and training in ophthalmology was unmatched. His vision resulted in the creation of the Advanced Eye Center. His message is very clear in advising residents when they enter any particular career stream, just follow the heart and do what you are passionate about and follow your dreams, be honest to yourself, and respect others. Prof. Gupta mentored several residents following the dictum; a good mentor is a coach, asking questions more often than giving answers. Mentors have an important role in guiding the residents as they develop their special attributes. The role is difficult and requires training, time, and mutual trust.

The clinical experience, research-oriented teaching by the highly committed and yet friendly faculty members had made the 3 years of residency as the most glorious years of my professional life to be cherished forever. All residents have an excellent opportunity to see very unusual clinical cases not only from Punjab and Haryana but also referred from adjoining state UP, Himachal Pradesh, and J and K. All faculty members emphasized on proper history, meticulous clinical examination, proper documentation, connecting the missing link, and thinking out of the box. Prof. Amod Gupta's message was very clear – make a habit of good observation, document, and try to present and publish unusual cases resulting in a significant contribution to the literature. I have shared my professional journey and lessons learned in two recently published books, namely, Secrets of Successful Doctors and A Hippocratic Odyssey: Lessons from a Doctor Couple on Life in Medicine, Challenges, and Doctorpreneurship.<sup>[3,4]</sup>

I indeed feel proud to be a PGIMER AEC alumni!

### Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

### Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

**Suresh K Pandey**

SuVi Eye Institute and Lasik Laser Center, Kota, Rajasthan, India


Correspondence to: Dr. Suresh K Pandey,  
SuVi Eye Institute and Lasik Laser Center, C 13 Talwandi,  
Kota - 324 005, Rajasthan, India.  
E-mail: suresh.pandey@gmail.com

### References

1. Gupta V. Father of uveitis in India: Prof. Amod Gupta. Indian J Ophthalmol 2020;68:1730.
2. Sharma A, Pandey SK, Mohan K, Khandelwal N, Gupta A. Tuberculosis of the lacrimal gland: A case report. J Pediatr Ophthalmol Strabismus 1998;35:237-9.
3. Pandey SK. Secrets of successful doctors: A complete guide to a fulfilling medical career. Maple Press; 2020.
4. Pandey SK, Sharma V. A hippocratic odyssey: Lessons from a doctor

couple on life in medicine, challenges and doctorpreneurship. Bloomsbury India; 2020.

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

Access this article online	
<b>Quick Response Code:</b>	<b>Website:</b> www.ijo.in
	<b>DOI:</b> 10.4103/ijo.IJO_2741_20

**Cite this article as:** Pandey SK. Diary of an ophthalmology resident: Recollections from Post Graduate Institute, Chandigarh. Indian J Ophthalmol 2021;69:160-1.

© 2020 Indian Journal of Ophthalmology | Published by Wolters Kluwer - Medknow