

College Fellowship Awards

Presenting Dr. Manel Pasqual for the honorary fellowship of the College of Ophthalmologists of Sri Lanka

Citation delivered by Dr. Surenda Kurara MD, Acting Consultant Ophthalmologist at the 29th Annual Congress of the College of Ophthalmologists of Sri Lanka

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It is with great pleasure that I undertake the honour of presenting Consultant Eye Surgeon, Gajanayaka Mudalige Manel Pasqual for the Honorary Fellowship of the College of Ophthalmologists of Sri Lanka.

Dr Manel Pasqual hails from the historical village of Aparekka in Matara. She was the first student to pass the year 7 scholarship exam from Polonnaruwa 'Sinhapura Primary School', and was qualified to join the prestigious girls' school, Devi Balika Vidyalaya, Colombo.

Entering the Medical Faculty of the Peradeniya University in 1979, she passed the 2nd MBBS with a 2nd class, and joined the second batch of the Medical Faculty of the Ruhuna University. Following the completion of her medical degree in May 1985, she began her internship at the Peradeniya Teaching Hospital, as an intern medical officer.

Then in September 1986, she served as a Medical Officer in the Outpatient's Department at the General Hospital, Anuradhapura, before she joined the Colombo Eye Hospital as a Post Graduate Trainee in Ophthalmology. Having successfully completed her diploma in Ophthalmology in 1990 with one year of surgical experience, she was appointed as the acting Eye Surgeon to the Base Hospital, Puttalam, where she performed cataract surgeries with minimum facilities available.

Thereafter, having being successful in her MS Ophthalmology – Part I, she joined the National Eye Hospital, Colombo as a Registrar in Ophthalmology. During this period, she had the opportunity of being trained under eminent consultant ophthalmologists at the Colombo Eye Hospital. She was awarded the Master of Surgery in Ophthalmology by the University of Colombo in 1996. From 1996 December to October 1997, she served as a Senior Registrar, at the National Eye Hospital, Colombo.

Undergoing her overseas training in 1997, at the Prince Charles Eye Unit in Windsor Hospital, United Kingdom, she had the opportunity of working with renowned Ophthalmologists such as, Mr. Jack. J. Kanski, Mr. Richard Pckard and Mr. Macallister.

After her return she served as a board-certified Eye Surgeon at the General Hospital, Matara, and thereafter in the same capacity at the General Hospitals of Kalutara and Negombo. During this period, she was able to complete the 3 months fellowship of Pediatric Ophthalmology, at LV Prasad Eye Hospital, Hyderabad, India, and training in small incision cataract surgery at St. Joseph's Hospital, Trichi, India.

Dr. Pasqual, also had the privilege of presenting papers on microphthalmos, chemical injuries of eye, and DALK at Annual Congresses of the College of Ophthalmologists of Sri Lanka.

Dr. Pasqual has tirelessly strived to improve the facilities of each and every Eye Unit of the out-station hospitals she was assigned to, and had left each unit a better place for her successors. She convinced the local community, to visit the closest eye unit, lessening the burden of teaching hospitals by dedicating herself to systematize these out-station eye units.

She has actively participated in surgical camps in various parts of Sri Lanka such as, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Tissamaharamaya, Embilipitiya, Katharagama, Mulathiev and Kilinochchi.

Since October 2006, she has been serving as a Consultant Eye Surgeon at the National Eye Hospital, Colombo and has been training many undergraduates and post graduates in Ophthalmology. Being a member of the Board of Study in Ophthalmology of the Postgraduate Institute of Colombo, she is also an examiner in MD Ophthalmology examinations, and also has been the chief examiner at several examinations.

Dr. Pasqual has served the Council of Ophthalmologists of Sri Lanka since 2004, in various capacities, including being its Secretary and Advisor. In 2011/2012 Dr. Pasqual had the privilege of being elected as the President of the College of Ophthalmologists of Sri Lanka.

During her capacity as the President of the College she led many activities in protecting its heritage in surgery, research activities and provision of medical education, all in the interest to enhance patient care.

As a member of the Lions Club, she has contributed in the capacity of an advisor for Lions Eye Hospitals in Hendala, Panadura, Kadawatha and Rathnapura. She often volunteers her time and expertise to conduct free cataract surgeries at these hospitals and continues to help in the upliftment of these hospitals. She has been serving as a Trustee of the Board of the Golden

Jubilee of the Eye Hospital, Kadawatha since its establishment.

Dr. Pasqual in her leisure time enjoys 'Home Gardening' and is also involved in many Buddhist activities.

Consultant Eye Surgeon, Dr. Manel Pasqual is well known for her exceptional services to the poorest of the poor, in restoring their sight through free cataract surgeries. Her unwavering commitment to the profession, together with continuous hard work, since she chose ophthalmology over three decades ago to eradicate reversible blindness in Sri Lanka, is appreciated by many all over the country.

Madam President, with great pride and pleasure I present Dr. Manel Pasqual who has done a great service to the field of ophthalmology in Sri Lanka for the conferment of the honorary fellowship of the College of Ophthalmologists of Sri Lanka.