



Dr. I. C. Verma, FRCP (Lond), FAMS (India), FAAP (USA)
Adviser and Senior Consultant
Institute of Medical Genetics and Genomics
Ganga Ram Institute of Postgraduate Medicine and Research
Sir Ganga Ram Hospital
Rajender Nagar, New Delhi 110060

Registration Number DMC-10464
Email icverma@gmail.com

Cellphone 9810109629
Office 91 11 42251997

Dated 19 August 2022

Dr. Hema Purandare

My contemporary Dr. Hema Purandare, the pioneer in the field of medical genetics started the first private genetic services centre in Mumbai in 1982. Our mutual interest in the field brought us together many a times at Genetic conferences and workshops. She ventured into the field in the pre-computer era, when the focus was on dealing with issues like infectious diseases, malnutrition and high maternal mortality. However, with 1.6 million babies born every year with birth defects of genetic and non-genetic disorders, parents and families needed help and guidance.

It was amazing how she introduced Maharashtra's medical community to this multi-specialty domain. Gradually the medical fraternity started paying attention to the genetic aspect of common chromosomal conditions like Down syndrome, ethnicity-based Thalassemia, and Sickle Cell disease. Her zeal made doctors realise the importance of incorporating this rare speciality as it deals with patients and families with heritable disorders and birth defects, which can be diagnosed in utero, managed ante and postnatal and prevented through Genetic counselling and a variety of tests. Indian Society for Prenatal Diagnosis and Therapy, the only organisation dedicated to Genetics of Fetal medicine was conceptualized in 1989 by her and like-minded multi-specialty doctors.

Fortunately, after completion of the human genome project in 2003 with the world- wide web and developments in bioinformatics the science evolved in leaps and bounds. Hema not only witnessed the progress but actively kept herself abreast and offered the latest services under one roof, which are availed by people from India and overseas. Establishing a private genetic healthcare centre against all odds and running it successfully for half a century winning the trust of not only her patients but fellow multi-specialty experts single-handed is a mammoth task achieved by Hema.

But she did not stop here.

Amongst her busy clinical schedules, she passionately devotes time to prepare new batches and offers Genetic Counselling, testing and even prenatal diagnosis training courses with due approvals. She was an important part of our Clinical Genetic counselling course that we conducted recently for the Academy of Future Medicine. .

Through her lectures, public interviews, articles, books, etc., she communicated with lay persons, and I had the privilege to launch her English book 'Shoots & Roots - genes matter the most' at the International Conference of Genetic Counselling 2021. The Marathi version 'Vansh Anuvansh' has received two prestigious state level awards in Maharashtra.

I wish Dr. Purandare well and resounding success in her ongoing initiatives to promote greater genetic literacy.

Dr. I. C. Verma

Dr. I. C. Verma