

FRONTLINE WARRIORS

THE HEROES OF COVID-19

#2

SECOND EDITION

6

INSPIRATIONAL
STORIES

*From professionals in the
fight against Covid-19*

INDRA

Dr. Tanvi Jha
GTB Hospital, News Delhi

"Covid 19 for me has been both enlightening as well as challenging. To begin with, I was extremely unsure in the beginning but soon enough all of us got back into action as our spinal reflexes kicked in. I was shifted from a non clinical branch to a 24*7 fever clinic and these shifts continued into the night. Every time I would go back into the hospital, it would look like a giant pool of infection that I could carry home with me and infect others. Soon hospital boundaries and demarcations within departments changed as well, which in a way helped improve interdepartmental relations within the hospital. Even though everything seemed dreadful at that time,

in a way I was grateful for being able to understand



better and learn a lot from the experience. It taught me the true meaning of being human, as I always felt and witnessed the fear and love for our close ones, and the helplessness in the eyes of the patients' relatives. My experience was full of ups and downs, as we had to go through all this when there were major issues like understanding of protocols and lack of training and instructions for us, who

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Dr. Parth Sharda
SVP Hospital, Ahmedabad

"I have experienced Covid-19 from both professional and personal perspectives. There was unavailability of PPE kits, issues with staffing, and an air of uncertainty when we first started off. Our hospital was allotted as a dedicated Covid hospital. The situation became really hectic, especially during the summer months from April to June when we had to wear PPE kits all day long. Nonetheless, we made sure that we followed all the safety measures for which there were several changes made to the hospital itself, including make-shift sanitization tunnels being put up at each gate of the hospital. The

healthcare system is doing its best to prevent the spread of the virus and we have to do our part too. If there's any changes that I'd suggest within the system, it's wastage of money on Covid Antigen Testing should be stopped. To talk from a more personal perspective, I was tested positive for Covid in August, while on duty. I had to stay in isolation and make sure that I don't come in contact with anyone at home. I



were on the frontline. But nonetheless we ensured that we at least kept in mind the safety protocols, like wearing proper gear while treating patients so that we don't risk spreading it to anyone else. I'm thankful for the experience I've had and all that it has taught me till date, but there are certain things, I believe that should be taken care of, include more regular revisions of protocols, frequent feedback sessions with the doctors actually posted on duty and understanding from them what the problems pertaining to that particular hospital might be."



was extremely worried about my parents who are old and have other medical ailments. Living in isolation in the same house as my parents and not being able to see them was a different experience altogether. It's a once in a lifetime experience with tons of learnings. I suggest everyone to always wear masks, sanitize hands at all times with an alcohol based sanitizer, and to please maintain social distancing."

Parna Dey, Nurse
DSP Hospital, Durgapur, WB

"I've been in this profession for many years and have never been this stressed. It only seems like everything is going wrong. I have never had a single complaint against my profession and I have always thought this as a blessing, to be able serve people and save their lives. When the first Covid case arrived at our hospital, it was extremely confusing and we always had to be on our toes. A completely separate isolation ward was set up, away from the main hospital building and other patients, right when all the cases started pouring in. The major issue that I noticed since then is staffing, because of which more senior health workers have had to step in. I am over 55 years of age and have diabetes and high cholesterol, in spite of which I have worked because I know it's my duty and would never back out. It has been a great learning experience for me, even at this age, as there is no end to knowledge. I have understood that the best we can do to prevent the spread of



the virus is by following proper guidelines. I always make sure I wear a PPE Kit, do frequent sanitization, isolate myself from others, and follow a proper diet that is high on nutrition. It's tough to stay away from loved ones during a time when you want to keep them safe and close to you, but I have to stay away from them to keep them safe and that's why I have been living in isolation away from my family. Things have changed over the past few months. At first there was a lot of uncertainty but now we have an idea of how to tackle the situation. Speaking from my personal experience, the only thing that should be changed is that staff aging 50 or more should not be put in Covid wards, as we are extremely susceptible to the virus due to our age and medical ailments."

Dr. Chakradhar Bolleddu
NRIMC General & Super Speciality Hospital

"My first experience of Covid-19 was a mix of a little bit of confusion, a little bit of fear, but a thought provoking moment when it came to saving my patients. From the very beginning itself I made sure I had all safety precautions in place to control the further spread which were always wearing a PPE kit, wearing masks, sanitizing my hands continuously, and always maintaining social distancing at all points. This of course brought in a fear for the safety of my family, I completely restricted myself from seeing them. It was extremely stressful as I could not see my family, also had to work for

prolonged hours, and there were several other restrictions. I had to change a lot of things in my daily life including my food timings, sleep timing, spending time for leisure, etc. But, as a Doctor it is my duty to be serving my patients. Apart from being under stress due to the increasing number of cases and the situation at hand, there were other issues that also needed to be taken care of - like staffing, hospital expenses, and availability of patient attenders. We have come a long way since the first case arrived at our hospital. We are now a complete Covid care unit with different wards allocated for mild,

moderate, and severe patients. Every Person is fighting their own fight and we must have respect



towards the nation and fellow human beings who are tirelessly serving hundreds and thousands of people during this time of a pandemic, where there is uncertainty and fright everywhere."

Dr. Akansha Agarwal
Lady Hardinge Medical, New Delhi

"My Covid experience has been nothing but scary. There was always a fear on my mind when I would walk into the hospital. The unpredictable number of deaths taking place made the situation scarier and more difficult to handle. There was a constant fear as to how I could not spread the infection to my family. Slowly and steadily things started to improve, with people actually understanding how to tackle the situation and SOPs being made available to us. The first change was the segregation of wards into different zones within

the hospital, so everyone had a fair idea of what was to be done. Even though there was a lack of hospital facilities like availability of PPE kits, beds, and other facilities, I had to make sure that I followed the basic safety practices. I made sure I always donned my PPE kit. I always ensured hand sanitization and wearing of masks, as I feared I would somehow contract the virus and spread it even further. Situations are getting better as people have a more comprehensive understanding of the



pandemic but there are still certain changes that are required within the healthcare system such as providing more facilities for affected health care workers. Everything said and done, it has been a great learning experience for me."

Harinakshi DH, Nurse
Government District Hospital, Karnataka

"Since the very first day of hearing the news about a new virus causing global havoc, a certain sense of fear has crept in. At the beginning it was difficult working for prolonged hours with PPE kits on, but eventually I got used to it. I was also concerned about my family and isolated myself at home to maintain social distancing, as I knew I was always around infected individuals and could contract the virus at any time, even with all the precautions. Professionally and Personally it has been a challenge. You never know how to handle situations such as these until you face it. Everyday is a risk, but as a health practitioner I am bound to do my responsibility and I feel a certain sense of satisfaction being able to serve people when they need us the most. I have tried my best, at the hospital as well as at home, to not spread the virus further. Since the day COVID 19 started to spread rapidly, I have isolated myself away from my husband. Till now we have been living in different bedrooms and hardly see each other. I had to ask my Uncle and Aunt, who are old and live with us, to shift back to their home for the time being as they are the most susceptible to the virus. In similar ways, our hospital was well prepared, even before the first case arrived we had the isolation ward ready, and after the cases started coming in we sanitized the entire



hospital. We did of course have a few issues with the availability of staff, as slowly the number of cases started to rise. There was a lot of tension in the hospital but we had to overcome that pretty fast, to be able to serve and treat our patients to the best of our ability. While on duty, I also contracted Covid and have had few health troubles since I recovered. I have been taking steam everyday, as that works best for me, I use eucalyptus oil while taking a bath as it helps with respiratory problems. Post recovery I still have chest pain, which is an after effect of the infection. I think there are certain protocols that everyone should follow, like having hot home-cooked food and hot water, wearing a mask at all times, and maintaining social distancing. At the hospital, I always make sure I wear a PPE kit at all times, follow proper sanitization routine, and once I am back home from the hospital I take a shower before coming in contact with anything or any one. These are only precautions one can take to prevent the spread of the virus. Otherwise, it has been a great experience for me and I have always been assisted with everything I have asked for by our hospital. We can now only hope for the best and keep following safety precautions whenever required."

About 'Frontline Warriors'

We understand that every person has their own experience during this pandemic, especially our heroes on the frontline. Doctors and Health Care Professionals are on the frontline of the fight against Covid-19. They are working continuously and tirelessly, risking their own lives, to save the lives of Covid-19 patients. Their efforts have been widely acclaimed at all levels.

Indra salutes them in their fight and takes the initiative of amplifying the voice of the frontline warriors, by documenting their experience in this magazine.

To tell you a bit about us, at Indra we make clean technology systems for water management & sustainability. To help India fight COVID-19, we're developing an Air and PPE disinfection system (VAJRA) with support from CAWACH (Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis) program of Department of Science & Technology, Government of India.

We would also like to thank our participating doctors and nurses, who took time out of their busy schedule to share with us an invaluable experience. Thank you for your contribution to society during such a difficult time.

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