

Foreword

“Doctors should infuse courage in the patients and speak soothingly, radiating compassion and love. While you are examining the patients, you should have smiling faces and talk to the patients sweetly.”

– Sri Sathya Sai Baba, February 6, 1993

Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s Life, His Message, His Ideals, and His Humanitarian Works can all be enshrined in one word—Love. He often says, “God is Love, Love is God, Live in Love.” In a historic letter dated May 25, 1947, at the tender age of twenty, Sri Sathya Sai Baba declared: “I have a task – To foster all mankind and ensure for all of them lives full of bliss. ... I am attached to a work that I love ... To remove the sufferings of the poor and grant them what they lack.”

In fulfilling this vow, Sri Sathya Sai Baba has been working incessantly for more than half a century to bring about the joyous experience of compassion and love to mankind all over the world. The global proportion to which this has grown is truly an unparalleled blessing for the entire world. In 1956, His mother Easwaramma requested Him to construct a hospital for the poor. While there are many hospitals, Sri Sathya Sai Baba believed that free healthcare, like free education and drinking water, is an inalienable right of every individual, irrespective of race, religion, caste, creed or economic status. With these noble ideals, the first Sathya Sai Hospital was established in Puttaparthi, India in 1956.

During the last 50 years this has blossomed into a vast global system delivering free healthcare in many countries using the principles taught by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. These principles together provide a framework for the delivery of ideal healthcare.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba has uplifted mankind through His teachings of love and service to all, by providing free education, free water supply and free healthcare. In the field of medicine, He has fundamentally redefined healthcare and has made the clarion call for all medical professionals to deliver ideal healthcare. Healthcare implemented by Sri Sathya Sai Baba is

universally accessible and state-of-the-art modern medicine is delivered with immense love, patience and compassion. Furthermore, health education and preventive care have been an essential component of this ideal healthcare. His healthcare mission involves thousands of healthcare professionals around the world who espouse His philosophy and work under His guidance.

In this book, “Sathya Sai Global Health Mission” we share with the medical community, global experiences of the successful implementation of ideal healthcare with love and compassion and free of cost to patients all over the world. The hope is that healthcare professionals will be inspired and go back to their own countries with the framework and tools needed to implement ideal healthcare in their own practices and communities.

This book gives an overview of the global healthcare mission guided by the principles of Sri Sathya Sai Ideal Healthcare. These principles are:

1. State-of-the-art healthcare must be accessible to all.
2. Healthcare must be free of cost to the patient.
3. Healthcare must be delivered with love and compassion.
4. Healthcare should be comprehensive and treat the body, mind and spirit of the patient.
5. Ideal healthcare should encompass disease prevention and provide education for patients and physicians alike.

This book begins with a description of how these principles of ideal healthcare are implemented in Sathya Sai medical institutions in India. These institutions stand as exemplars of ideal healthcare delivered efficiently in today’s world.

Disease prevention is fundamental to ideal healthcare. The chapter on preventive healthcare highlights the multitude of programmes such as immunisation, malaria prevention, prevention of waterborne diseases and cancer screening in several countries. Patients receive health education regarding personal hygiene, environmental hygiene, diet, exercise and lifestyle changes to prevent illness and improve their health.

The next two chapters describe the delivery of ideal healthcare in India, North America, Central America, South America, Europe, Russia, Africa, Middle East, Asia, Australia, Fiji, and New Zealand through medical camps, permanent medical clinics, dental camps and veterinary camps.

Nature's vicissitudes often wreak havoc on large populations. Consider for example the tsunami of 2004 that originated off the coast of Indonesia or the earthquake of 2007 in Peru. These natural disasters leave thousands of people with disrupted lives needing healthcare. Disease prevention becomes even more imperative under these circumstances due to the rapid spread of waterborne diseases. The chapter on disaster relief describes individual triumphs over nature's devastations where ideal healthcare is rapidly deployed to these disaster stricken areas.

Even after treatment, people suffer from the disabling sequelae of illnesses that can interfere with daily life. It is during this difficult phase of their life that they require specialised care that addresses their physical, psychological, and social well-being. The chapter on rehabilitation describes several rehabilitation programmes instituted in the world by the Sathya Sai Organisation that enables patients to function as self-reliant members of their communities.

The next chapter describes the Sri Sathya Sai International Centre for Medical Services. This project enables healthcare professionals and other interested individuals to take part in providing medical supplies, medical equipment and other resources needed for medical facilities in different parts of the world.

Medical science is ever evolving both in knowledge base and in technology. It is imperative that physicians and healthcare workers throughout the world remain at the forefront of this evolution so that the best medical care can complement the compassionate and loving delivery of that care. The Sathya Sai

Organisation has hosted several conferences where physicians and dentists are updated on current medical literature, cutting-edge technology and new surgical techniques in patient management. The chapter on conferences and seminars describes a few of these events.

The last chapter lucidly gives a hopeful and bright vision for the future where we have the potential to transform mundane healthcare of today into ideal healthcare of tomorrow. There are several remote areas in India and in other parts of the world where people are unable to travel distances to access ideal healthcare. There are two ways the Sri Sathya Sai Ideal Healthcare is able to reach them. The first is through the extensive use of telehealth technology, currently used by the Sathya Sai medical institutions to provide specialty consultations to patients in remote villages of India. Through telemedicine the Sathya Sai medical institutions are linked to other reputed medical institutions and distinguished medical faculty from different parts of the world. This facilitates teaching of the residents in training and also provides opportunities for consultations with experts and grand round discussions on diagnostic challenges. The second is through mobile clinics and hospitals. A successful Sathya Sai mobile hospital in India is described in this chapter. This mobile hospital provides diagnostic, therapeutic and preventive healthcare at the doorstep of the neglected and poor rural populace.

These are challenging times for the world as we see increasing concerns about health budgets, quality of healthcare and lack of universal access to healthcare. A call for radical changes in healthcare delivery has been made in several countries. Healthcare reform has been on the agenda of several governments. The timing is now perfect for a rebirth of humane medicine. Sri Sathya Sai Baba's message to provide excellent and free health services with selfless love, compassion and empathy to everyone is being adopted by thousands of healthcare professionals throughout the world. This model of Sathya Sai Ideal Healthcare has laid the foundation for ideal healthcare worldwide.

Narendranath Reddy, MD

Chairman,

Sri Sathya Sai International Medical Committee