



“ We chose the DR 400 because it offers a complete, scalable DR solution that is able to grow and develop as our requirements change. ”

DR PRAVIN SURYAWANSHI

Deputy Dean, Chief Executive Officer, Professor and Head, Department of Surgery and Chief Endoscopist, Advanced Laparoscopic and Hepato Pancreatico Biliary Surgeon, MGM, Aurangabad, Maharashtra, east of Mumbai

DR plays a key role in advancing Asian healthcare standards

Dr Pravin Suryawanshi, of the Mahatma Ghandi Memorial Hospital (MGM) in Aurangabad, Maharashtra, east of Mumbai, talks about the healthcare challenges of serving an economically challenged population and how DR is playing a vital part in preparing the next generation of doctors.

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Interview with DR PRAVIN SURYAWANSHI, Deputy Dean, Chief Executive Officer, Professor and Head, Department of Surgery and Chief Endoscopist, Advanced Laparoscopic and Hepato Pancreatico Biliary Surgeon, MGM, Aurangabad, Maharashtra, east of Mumbai

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The 1000 bed Mahatma Gandhi Mission Hospital (MGM) serves a local population of six million people drawn from the 12 districts of Maharashtra. When it was founded by the Mahatma Ghandi Mission Trust in 1990, it was with two key objectives: to provide the highest quality healthcare to the local population and to deliver advanced standards of teaching to its future generation of healthcare providers through its Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery and Postgraduate Courses (MD/MS/PG Diploma).

However, in an economically challenged region where money is scarce and 40% of the population is below the poverty line, the challenges posed by these two aims are ones not often seen in more developed regions.

Says Dr Suryawanshi, Deputy Dean, Chief Executive Officer, Professor and Head, Department of Surgery and Chief Endoscopist, Advanced Laparoscopic and Hepato Pancreatico Biliary Surgeon, “We serve a diverse range of patients. Many are drawn from local communities where healthcare has traditionally been scarce. These patients will often present with issues such as dysentery or other water-borne diseases, like hepatitis. In addition, because we are one of the fastest growing industrial areas in our region, there is also a transient labour force that is being drawn into the city to find work. This means we are also faced with industrial accidents, road traffic accidents, fractures, etc.

“As a result, our X-ray patient numbers have increased from around 100 people per day two years ago to around 160 a day now, and we expect the rate of increase to continue at a similar pace over the next few years.”

Taking a creative approach to the financial challenges

Dr Suryawanshi continues: “Because the local population is so poor, they can afford to pay only a fraction of what it costs to actually treat them, and we are charging just 10% of the costs that other facilities in the region are charging for the same care. However, although we are catering to the poorest class in the

community, we still want to provide them with the very best quality healthcare. In addition, as a teaching facility, we remain committed to providing our students with exposure to the best technology and facilities and to offering them the best learning experiences.

“Another challenge is that we wanted to shorten the time per X-ray; aiming to achieve around 120 X-rays out of the 160 we do each day in just four hours.

“Meeting both of our stated objectives can, therefore, be very difficult, and, as we are a completely self-financing trust, we have to look continually for ways to generate new funds.”

And the way the hospital is meeting this challenge is to ensure it is using all of its facilities to maximum benefit by developing its technological capabilities, the reputation of the specialties offered by the medical centre and hospital, and by taking on outsourced contracts from government and the corporate sector to provide access to services they do not provide themselves.

Dr Suryawanshi explains, “We became an Agfa HealthCare customer about five years ago, through the installation of the CR 30-X with DRYSTAR 5500 and DRYSTAR AXYS, and were very satisfied with our solution. More recently, we became the first hospital in Asia to install the DR 400.

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DR 400

- Flexible configurations and options for most needs
- Floor-mounted for cost-effective and easy installation and use
- Best-of-breed solid components, offering reliability and maximum uptime
- Can be equipped with CR and DR technology
- DR systems can be combined/integrated with Agfa HealthCare CR systems for even greater versatility



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our requirements change. This was of critical importance to us because to be able to promote ourselves to the corporate sector to attract the funding we need, we have to continually upgrade our infrastructure and services to deliver the most advanced medical capabilities.”

Education a key component to successful adoption

The drive for technological advantage does, however, pose its own additional challenges, as Dr Suryawanshi explains. “For our patients, many of whom are poorly educated, they simply accept what we provide and it doesn’t matter what technologies we use. However, for many of the established healthcare providers, they have found it challenging to accept digital imaging. They are used to seeing, and in many cases still want to see, images on film, so there continues to be an educational process with some of our colleagues.”

Dr Suryawanshi recognizes that, for some, acceptance of digital imaging will take time, but he is passionate that the medical school graduates, which now number 150 graduates and 80 post graduate students a year, are experienced and comfortable with the very latest digital technologies. He says, “We are one of the very few medical colleges in our state to have super specialty courses like plastic surgery, cardiology, urology, pediatrics, radiology and nephrology and were recently given A+ Accreditation from the National Assessment and Accreditation council – a very prestigious accreditation. Providing students with access to leading technologies and capabilities, such as those offered by the DR 400, is pivotal to that achievement.”

By 2020, MGM Institute of Health Sciences, of which MGM is part, aims to be a top-ranking Centre of Excellence in Medical Education and Research. To achieve this, Dr Suryawanshi sees MGM’s continued association with Agfa HealthCare as a key element.

“We have enjoyed excellent advice and immense support from Agfa HealthCare over the last five years. As we move forward, and the gap between what our patients can afford to pay and what we need to recoup to finance ongoing technological developments continues to be difficult, being able to reduce running costs by maximizing efficiencies and having complete confidence in our choice of solutions will be critical.”

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