

# NEWS

## ACADEMIC

**Graduation Day 2020:** The Institute Graduation Day 2020, was held on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021 in virtual mode. Prof. Lingaraja Gandhi, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Bengaluru University, Bengaluru, Ms. Preeti Pant, Joint Secretary (Urban Health), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, New Delhi, and Shri. Ramesh K Oza, Audiologist, Calipsonic, Mumbai, were the distinguished guests of the function. Awards, honors, and endowment cash prizes were presented to the University rank holding students of the Institute, sponsored by AIISH alumni and others. Prizes and medals were also awarded to the best clinical conference and journal club presentations.

**AIISH Entrance Examination:** The Institute conducted national-level online entrance examinations to admit students to the Bachelor of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (B.ASLP), M.Sc. (Audiology), and M.Sc. (Speech-Language Pathology) programs on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021. A total of 2001 candidates appeared for the B.ASLP entrance examination, 408 for M.Sc. (Audiology) and 299 for M.Sc. (Speech-Language Pathology) examinations held in 15 centres in 13 states across the country.

**RCI Inspection and Recognition:** The Institute obtained the renewal of affiliation for conducting Diploma Programme in Hearing Aid and Earmould Technology, and approval for enhancement of the number of seats of the B.ASLP program from the existing 62 to 82 from the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), Govt. of India, New Delhi. A team of RCI experts comprising, Dr. Sanjay Mujral and Dr. Suman carried out a physical inspection of the Institute facilities and services in this regard on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**AIISH Audiology Convention:** The Institute organized the 1<sup>st</sup> AIISH Audiology Convention with the theme, *Bridging the gap between theory and clinical practice in audiology* under the aegis of the Department of Audiology, from 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> November 2021, in virtual mode. The conference's objective was to update the knowledge and skills of the students and professionals in the field of audiology. Dr. Sunil Kumar, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India, inaugurated the event. Dr. Shelly Chadha, Technical Lead, Ear and Hearing Care, Department of Non-communicable Diseases, W.H.O., served as the guest of honor and delivered a keynote address. There were eight invited talks, two-panel discussions, 42 scientific paper presentations, and four doctoral theses presentations. Two scientific papers in each conference category were considered for the best paper award. Nearly three hundred students and professionals across the world registered for the program. The convention instituted an oration award for the speech and hearing professional who served in the Department of Audiology, AIISH, for more than 15 years. Sri E.P. Balakrishnan, a retired employee of the Audiology Department, AIISH, Mysore, received the first AIISH Audiology Oration Award for his accomplishments and contribution to the field.

**NAAC Assessment and Accreditation:** The Institute underwent the cycle-II assessment of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, UGC from 29<sup>th</sup> December to 30<sup>th</sup> December 2021. A three-member NAAC delegation led by its Chairman Prof. (Dr.) Jaspal Singh Sandhu, Vice-Chancellor, Gurunanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab; Member coordinator, Prof (Dr.) Vijay Nath Mishra, Professor Department of Neurology, Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh; and Member, Prof. (Dr.) Sujata Bhan, Professor & Head, Department of Special Education, SNDT Womens' University, Mumbai, assessed the Institute.

## ADMINISTRATIVE

**Standing Finance Committee Meeting:** The 52<sup>nd</sup> Standing Finance Committee meeting of the Institute was held under the Chairmanship of Shri Vikas Sheel, Additional Secretary & Mission Director (NHM), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India, New Delhi, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022. Dr. M. Pushpavathi, Director, AIISH, presided over the meeting. All the committee members attended the meeting, which was held in virtual mode.

## COMMEMORATIVE

**Cleft Lip and Palate Awareness month:** The Institute observed July 2021 as Cleft Lip and Palate Awareness Month to raise awareness about and prevent a congenital condition known as cleft lip and palate. A live-phone-in-program was organized for the persons and caregivers of Cleft-Lip and Palate on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Dr.M. Pushpavathi, Director, AIISH, and Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Gupta, Clinical Psychologist, AIISH, served as the resource persons. Dr. Gopi Sankar, Research Officer, moderated the program, which was broadcasted live on the official Facebook page and YouTube channel of the Institute.

**International Sign Language Day 2021:** The Institute observed the International Day of Sign Language on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021. Dr. M. Pushpavathi, Director, AIISH, inaugurated the event and delivered a message. Shri. Rajkumar R., Special Educator, AIISH, delivered an online orientation lecture as a part of the event. The topics covered in the lecture include, introduction to sign language, finger spellings & numbers, basic vocabulary, sentence framing and grammar in Indian sign language. Nearly 800 persons from across the country attended the orientation program. The commemoration activities were organized under the aegis of the Augmentative and Alternative Communication Unit, Department of Clinical Services, and Department of Special Education of the Institute.

**International Day of Persons with Disabilities:** The International Day of Persons with Disabilities was observed at the Institute on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021. The event was aimed to promote awareness of disability issues, the fundamental rights of persons with disabilities, and their political, social, economic, and cultural fields. Mrs. Roopa

M.J. I.P.S., Additional Commissioner, Mysuru City Corporation, virtually participated as the chief guest and M. Pushpavathi, Director, AIISH, Mysuru, presided. Ms. Ramadevi B., the mother of an autistic child treated at the Institute, was conferred the Best Mother of the Year 2021 award on the occasion. Also, Mr. Karthik B.K., a person with cleft lip and palate, who completed the diploma in electronics and communication, and currently working as Technical Lead in Happy Minds Company, Mysuru, Ms. Asna T.P, a person with hearing impairment, who completed her Bachelor's Degree in Architecture, currently working as an architect and designer, and Annushaka Bhattacharjee, a person with autism spectrum disorder, who completed her 10<sup>th</sup> standard through National Open Schooling, and working as an Assistant Teacher at a special school, were felicitated.

### **World Hearing Day**

The Institute celebrated World Hearing Day on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022 with the theme "*To hear for life, listen with care,*" which focuses on the importance and means of hearing loss prevention through safe listening. Shri. Mansukh Mandavya, Hon'ble Union Health Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India, inaugurated the event at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. Newborn screening, adult screening, and school student screening reports on communication disorders, and public education pamphlets on 13 types of communication disorders in English, Hindi & Kannada languages were released during the occasion. Poster competitions, games, and other activities were also carried out as a part of the World Hearing Day celebration.

### **CLINICAL CARE**

**Inclusive Therapy Park:** The Institute opened an inclusive therapyone of its kind for children with communication disorders. Shri. Vikas Sheel, I.A.S, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and Shri. Prathap Simha, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Mysuru-Kodagu Lok Sabha Constituency, inaugurated the facility on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2021. The park, a joint venture of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, and Mysore City Corporation, provides an inclusive environment for children with special needs

and facilitates their independent play skills. The play equipment in the park includes wheel-chair-enabled swing and merry-go-round, mother-and child-friendly see-saw, tyre and rope climbers, tyre tunnels and crawlers, mini-and multi-play stations. The park also includes an exercise area for adults and elderly persons with communication disorders such as aphasia, dysarthria, and apraxia with co-morbid motor disabilities.

**AAC Awareness Week:** The Institute observed the International AAC Awareness Week with the theme, *Get Out, Speak Up, and Breakthrough the screen in a Recovering World* from 25<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Mr. David Goldberg, renowned AAC & Assistive Technology Specialist, Princeton, New Jersey, USA, delivered an invited talk on *Case studies on application of AAC devices for clients with communication disorders* on 25<sup>th</sup> October in virtual mode. An orientation program was held about AAC Unit and myths & facts about AAC in Kannada and Malayalam on 26<sup>th</sup> October. An exhibition of AAC devices was also arranged. Competitions on minimal pair signing games, memory-based signing games, and signing for statements/ slogans were conducted for staff and students of the Institute. The Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Unit of the Institute coordinated the event.

**Newborn Care Week:** On the occasion of the National Newborn Care Week being observed from 15<sup>th</sup> November to 21, the Institute took the initiative in raising awareness about newborn care, specifically focusing on the importance of early identification and intervention of babies at risk for communication disorders. A free newborn screening camp for communication disorders was organized from 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at the Institute.

**Mobile App for Hearing Screening:** The Department of Audiology developed an android-based mobile app, *AIISH Hearing Screening (AHS) App*, for hearing screening. Using this end-to-end app, people can screen themselves to test their hearing abilities and get it rectified by visiting their nearest speech and hearing centers. The AHS app is freely downloadable from the Google Playstore, and it takes less than five minutes to administer. It is useful for testing the hearing of adults and children aged eight years and above.

**Designation of AIISH as Disability Certification Centre:** The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Govt. Of India designated the Institute as Disability Certification Centre for issuing Disability Certificates pertaining to the hearing impairment and speech-language disabilities as per the norms of the National Medical Commission (NMC). This will facilitate the persons with hearing impairment and speech-language disabilities to obtain certificates conveniently since centres for examining such disabilities are very few in the country.

## **EXTENTION OF SERVICES**

**MoUs for Opening New Outreach Service Centres:** The Outreach Service Centres (OSCs) of the Institute cater to screening, diagnostic and rehabilitative services to people with speech, language, and hearing disorders. During the reporting year, the Institute signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with eleven health science institutions across the country to open new OSCs. The institutions are: (1) All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, (2) All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Jodhpur, Rajasthan, (3) All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, (4) Community Health Center, Malappuram, Kerala, (5) Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, (6) Government Institute of Medical Sciences (GIMS), Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, (7) Government Medical College Hospital, Surguja, Chattisgarh, (8) Koppala District Teaching Hospital, Koppal, Karnataka, (9) Lok Nayak Hospital, New Delhi, (10) Mahatama Gandhi Memorial Medical College, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, and (11) Subdivision Hospital, Kundapura, Karnataka

## **OTHERS**

**56<sup>th</sup> Annual Day:** The Institute celebrated its 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Day on 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2021. Ms. Vandana Gurnani, Additional Secretary (Health), Govt. of India, served as chief guest of the inaugural function held in virtual mode. The AIISH Hearing Screening App was released on the event. Also, various test materials, public education pamphlets, posters, and newborn hearing screening reports were released. The Institute introduced a transportation service for the elderly and physically disabled

persons with communication disorders using a battery-operated vehicle sponsored by the Bank of Baroda, AIISH branch on the occasion. The day was also marked with tree plantation by the Director, faculty, and staff of the Institute.

**Upgradation of Campus Network and Server System:** The Institute upgraded its LAN ethernet cables from CAT 5 (Category 5) to CAT 6A (Category 6 Augmented) to deliver faster connection speed for internet browsing, streaming videos and conducting webinars and online meetings. The CAT 6A cables can transfer data up to 10 GB per second and up to 328 feet. The upgrade project was started in July 2020 and was completed in September 2020. Parallel to the LAN up-gradation, the webserver was also upgraded with facilities for central storage, better backup, easy logins, patch management, load balancer and proxy server. The upgraded infrastructure can accommodate additional complex and varying requirements, including handling greater bandwidth demands in the future.

**Vigilance Awareness Week 2021:** In line with the directions of the Central Vigilance Commission, the Institute observed Vigilance Awareness Week 2021 from 26<sup>th</sup> October to 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021. Several activities were organized to spread the year's theme, 'Independent India @ 75: Self Reliance with Integrity'. The program began with administering the Integrity Pledge to all the staff by Dr. M.Pushpavathi, Director, AIISH, in the presence of Dr. P. Manjula, Vigilance Officer. Posters with slogans on vigilance and integrity were displayed at various locations of the Institute. Sri. Mahabir Singh Kasana, Former Joint Director, Institute of Secretariat Training and Management, DoPT., Govt. of India & Master Trainer, gave a guest lecture on Transparency and accountability to promote self-reliance in governance on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021, in virtual mode.

**National Conference of the Indian Speech-Language and Hearing Association:** The Institute hosted the 53<sup>rd</sup> National Conference of the Indian Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ISHACON) on 19-20<sup>th</sup> February 2022. Shri. Vikas Sheel, Additional Secretary & Mission Director, National Health Mission, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India, inaugurated the program in virtual mode. There were 16 plenary talks, 36 oral research paper presentations, and 115 poster

presentations. During the occasion, Dr. M. Pushpavathi, Director, AIISH, Dr. Ajith Kumar, U., Professor of Audiology, AIISH and Dr. Rajapandian, Managing Director, HEARZAP, Hyderabad were felicitated with Dr. N. Rathna Oration Award, Prof. S. Kameswaran Endowment Oration Award and Prof. R.K. Oza Oration Award, respectively, for their contribution to the field of Speech and Hearing. The Mysore Chapter of the Indian Speech-Language and Hearing Association (*MyISHA*) organized the event, and more than 1,300 delegates from across the country and abroad participated.