

Impact Assessment of Aurobindo Geriatric Eye Care Centre, LV Prasad Eye Institute, Visakhapatnam



Executive Summary

This impact assessment examined the Aurobindo Pharma Foundation (APF) under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) support to LV Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI) in establishing Aurobindo Geriatric Eye Care Centre (AGECC) during 2016. The AGECC aims to provide appropriate treatment to the vision problems of older adults and thus contribute to social equity and improve the quality of life of older adults.

Hyderabad based think-tank, Poverty Learning Foundation, has done the assessment adopting the Organization for Economic-cooperation and Development (OECD) criteria reflecting on the nature of the investments by APF and interventions by AGECC-LVPEI and considering priorities of LVPEI and CSR of APF and the context. The evaluation uses the criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability - by looking into the LVPEI professional competence, financial competence, and networking competence.

The objectives are:

1. Examining the inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact of AGECC-LVPEI
2. Quantify the visibility created, and local acceptancy
3. Quantifying the perceptions of different category of stakeholders
4. Examine the sustainability of the project
5. Lessons learned for future planning

In line with the OECD criteria, assessment adopted a mixed-method dominated by the qualitative analysis, complemented with quantitative analysis wherever essential. The tools for data collection are a Semi-structured questionnaire, partially self-administered and partially filled by the assessment team during telephonic discussions, MIS template, and Checklist for case study documentation.



Five doctors and one administrator-operations were contacted for information. Besides, 37 older adults patients were also interviewed to know their satisfaction levels over the quality of service.

Inputs:

Aurobindo Geriatric Eye Care Centre in LVPEI serving the older adults with Cataract, Glaucoma, Presbyopia, Age related macular

degeneration, and diabetic retinopathy. The APF investments facilitated LVPEI to procure advanced equipment - Cataract Surgery Microscope, Vitreoretinal Instruments, Retinal Camera, and Anaesthetic Machine, and improve the infrastructure (Including operation theatres). APF also supported LVPEI to procure Van to mobilize the elderly patients to the hospital.

Relevance - *Is the intervention meeting intended purpose?*

1. Aurobindo Pharma Foundation investing in Geriatric Eye Care and supporting LVPEI to provide necessary services is the right choice as LVPEI is one of the World Health Organization collaborating centers to prevent blindness, comprehensive care, sight enhancement, and rehabilitation services.
2. The need of the geriatric eye care centre is justified by several documents, including “Andhra Pradesh Eye Disease Study: policy implications for eye-care services (APEDS-2001), which concluded four critical requirements: (i) disease control, (ii) human resource development, (iii) technology, and (iv) infrastructure development to ensure quality eye care.
3. LVPEI outreach policy helps the rural older adults to access the initial care at vision centres. Since 2016, AGECC-LVPEI mapped 32000 older adults (65+) in outreach camps and identified 6746 older adults patients for further treatment.
4. Since 2016, the AGECC-LVPEI has extended adequate eye care, provided medical consultancy services to 1,22,304 outpatients, and performed 17,736 surgeries.
5. The majority of the older adults availed the geriatric eye services are from impoverished rural families, and the rest are from urban areas, slums included.

Effectiveness - *Is the intervention effective to reach defined objectives?*

6. The quality of the geriatric eye care facilities in AGECC-LVPEI mobilized the patients from Andhra Pradesh north-costal districts, including Odisha and few other states. It is evident from the MIS data showing increasing trends in patients flow.
7. Quality of diagnosis and surgeries are possible from the modern equipment - Cataract Surgery Microscope, Vitreoretinal Instruments, Retinal Camera, and Anaesthetic Machine procured with the funds from APF.
8. Peer-to-peer learning on operating procedures has gained momentum giving visibility to the AGECC. LVEIP has organized technical workshops and meetings with 1833 medical professionals and peers on standard protocols of advanced equipment and their advantages.
9. LVPEI promotes the visibility of the APF through the time-tested method of word-of-mouth publicity and social media, and the support is duly acknowledged during the in-house workshops and peer-to-peer learnings.

Efficiency - *How well are resources being used?*

10. Funds received from APF utilized in more efficient way. Of the total grants received, a majority (73%) was spent on procuring advanced equipment which has strengthened the quality services. Next highest amount (18%) invested on building, followed by Other equipment (7%), Furniture (1%) and Computers (slightly less than 1%).
11. LVPEI is having a limited medical and supporting team to meet the patient load. In the future, the increasing patient flow will increase the stress among the medical team, which has significant and material impacts on patient care quality.
12. The presence of advanced equipment has enhanced the efficiency of doctors in terms of quality of diagnosis, surgeries, and time-saving.
13. Efficient way of spreading eye care services, with limited resources, to rural areas is well established. Older adults with vision impairments were identified through vision centres in north-coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, deserved cases, and referred to AGECC-LVPEI in Visakhapatnam for further treatment.

Impact - *What difference does the investments make?*

14. APF support has improved overall operational efficiency, including clinical capabilities.
15. The positive impact on zero-down the errors in diagnosis is the critical outcome of advanced equipment Cataract Surgery Microscope, Vitreoretinal Instruments, Retinal Camera, and Anaesthetic Machine.
16. The negative impact is increased workload on limited medical staff resulting in stress, affecting their efficiency.
17. Improved operational efficiency promotes a more significant number of older patients from different states and gives scope to promote “medical tourism” from other countries.
18. Older adults patients’ are satisfied with physical infrastructure, booking the appointment, waiting time at OPD, and more importantly, satisfied with the quality of the service.
19. Patients are satisfied with the quality of services directly linked with the quality of service, professionalism of doctors, and surgical equipment used for surgeries. It is the "value addition" in the entire process of geriatric eye care supported by APF.
20. The overall impact from the support of APF is – timely diagnosis and effective treatment. Accurate data-driven methods increased treatment efficiency, reduced challenges in treating glaucoma, retina, and cataract, improved confidence among the medical team, increased patients' medical adherence, and reduced the burden of out-of-pocket expenditures for caregivers.
21. The majority of the patients are referred by either friend or relative who already visited AGECC-LVPEI. It implies that the impact of care has gained the confidence of patients who already availed the eye care services.

Sustainability - *Will the benefits last?*

22. LVPEI has utilized the one-time grant from APF and improved its outcome efficiency and attracting older adults patients from different corners.
23. Time-to-time up-gradation of the equipment is one factor influencing the sustainability of geriatric eye care service. Present equipment and infrastructure are sufficient to meet the existing patient flow; however, shortly, given the revolutions in medical equipment, the next generation equipment may dominate the eye care systems by adding value to the quality of care and influencing sustainability in the long run.
24. The AGECC certainly sustain itself in the future as the growing older adults population increases pressure on geriatric eye care services.
25. However, meeting the projected demand with limited staff may affect the quality of services in the future.
26. Given the demographic projections, sustainability depends on the LVPEI financial and institutional capacities for further networking with more donors over the long run.

Concluding recommendations

27. LVPEI has to focus on new-generation equipment for diagnosis and surgeries. Ophthalmology is one of the most technology-driven branches, which has to be modernized in line with changing technology.
28. To reduce the workload and stress among the medical and administrative staff, LVPEI has to explore additional funds and increase the team. In the future, given the demographic shift, more older people may visit the hospital for eye care services.
29. It also has to establish "secondary vision centres" in significant towns of north-coastal districts, including adjoining districts of Odisha, to minimize the demand for OPD in LVPEI in Visakhapatnam and give much priority to the surgeries.
30. After OPD, when older patients move from one specialization to another for diagnostic tests, long wait times must be minimized by exploring relevant mechanisms. Otherwise, it negatively affects the patients' confidence in their service providers.
31. Providing short-stay facilities may be thought of as most patients from far-reaching places are visiting the AGECC.

