

a model that is a challenge

In CMC, the terms ‘industry’ and ‘customer’ are rarely used as pertaining to the domain of healthcare. Rather, those working in CMC see themselves as participating in the ‘healing ministry’ mandated by the Great Physician.

CMC is conscious of critical developments escalating the cost of healthcare beyond the affordability of the average Indian. CMC gives priority to being a service-provider over making profits.

As CMC sees it, while the healthcare ‘industry’ may be booming, healthcare ‘service’ in India faces serious challenges like never before given many negative public experiences and opinions on falling ethics



due to commercialisation of healthcare. CMC is unwilling to move away entirely from 'poor-friendly interventions' to insurance-driven packages.

While the costs of healthcare are escalating beyond the affordability of the average Indian and many hospitals are becoming five-star facilities with an over-emphasis on high-cost technological processes and interventions aimed at catering mainly to certain segments of society, mainly the upwardly mobile classes, CMC offers affordable healthcare for the middle classes and the poor.

Despite lower funds allocation for public health ventures, combined with the dual disease burden induced by the persistence of



Signage at CMC Hospital in Thottapalayam.

communicable diseases and the emergence of new lifestyle diseases posing a challenge to India's health ecosystem, CMC has always had a history of working closely with government institutions on a variety of projects - HIV, polio, training, etc - to fulfil national mandates of bringing healthcare to all segments of society, especially the poor and marginalised.

The current unresolved controversies in medical education and accessibility to it will also, perhaps, precipitate an exodus of young doctors to overseas destinations leaving India with a human resource crunch in the healthcare sector, some experts warn. CMC's objective is to meet such challenges and train doctors and para-medical personnel who, in the spirit of service over profit, will serve the masses within the country.

Left: The morning crowd waits for the OP counters to open.

Below: Patients line up at the registration counter.



swimming against the tide

CMC Vellore has a history of swimming against the tide and avoiding competition with private, corporate entities. As an institution and a community, CMC has never been concerned about maintaining a 'market position', a business parameter determined by profit statements and media ratings which are relevant, but only up to a point. CMC considers itself a missionary organisation with a mandate for service to the needy, disadvantaged and downtrodden. CMC, which has seen spectacular growth in the recent past, does not foster self-promotion but stands for the propagation of the core values of its health mission which it zealously seeks to nurture, protect and propagate through action.

CMC's values are practiced through the quality of its care and affordability for its patients who remain the greatest champions and advocates of its 100-year legacy. CMC's strategy is need-based and responsive to the emerging needs of society. The current needs, from a public health perspective, are road-trauma management, metabolic emergencies, geriatric and paediatric emergencies, epidemics like dengue and similar diseases, the escalating numbers of pollution-related respiratory diseases in children, cancer in the young, and adolescent behavioural disorders. CMC seeks to stand in the gap in the face of increasing lacunae in the national health care strategy to meet such contemporary crises.

