

Cardiac Care Center-Khambhat

Maneklal Mohanlal Parikh Cardiac Care center is located in Khambhat, Gujarat, India and was originally built in 1943 by Mr. B.K. Patel, Mr. Chunilal Girdharlal and Mr. Mulchandbhai Zaveri, all of whom were from Khambhat. At that time, the only services provided were labor and delivery. Today, there are many high tech facilities in the hospital. Three physicians from America come to serve the local population on regular basis here. The patients get treated at low cost or no cost, when they are not able to afford the treatments. In fact, several donors have adopted 150 diabetic patients, who receive their medical care, medications and other supplies free of charge.

In most hospitals in India, if a patient develops a heart attack, there are at least two formalities to observe before the treatment even begins. First, he has to deposit at least Rs 20,000 which will enable him to purchase the necessary medications. The second issue has to do with Mediclaim (the health insurance in India) – if he has it, he's OK but if he doesn't, then he'll have to deposit another Rs 50,000 to continue his treatment. This kind of scenario plays out at many renowned hospitals in many Indian cities but not in M.M. Parikh Cardiac Care Center.

One of the secretary of the hospital, does not share this ideology. “Our motto is treatment of the patient first and then everything else comes later. The ability to pay does not determine how a patient will be treated. If the hospital were to ask for money up front, it would put additional stress on the family of the patient. Therefore, we at the Khambhat hospital provide the necessary treatments to the patient, even if he or his family is unable to pay at the time of admission.” The hospital has a cardiac care center, a dialysis center, and a digital imaging center. There is also a well-equipped laboratory that is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. People from 90 surrounding villages and towns come to the hospital for treatment, in addition to those who reside in Khambhat.

Dr. Bhupendra Kapadia, a vascular surgeon from Khambhat, and who now lives in America, has come back very frequently to his home town for the last 20 years to provide his services to the community. He has assisted in the construction of a well-equipped medical ICU that conforms to American standards. He notes that in India, most ICUs have one or two rooms which are separated by curtains. But in Khambhat hospital, there are 10 separate ICU rooms, which help to prevent cross infection from one patient to another, and affords patients and their families the privacy they deserve. ICU charge is Rs. 500 (\$10) per day for those who can afford to pay. The staff is very well trained. There are also 10 dialysis machines in the hospital seven are set for Noninfectious patients and the other three are for infected (hepatitis) patients. This also helps to prevent infections from spreading. Another physician who is associated with M M Parikh cardiac care center hospital is Dr. Bipin Shah, a hematologist-oncologist who also resides in America. He has come to the hospital frequently to offer his services to the local community, free of charge.

Many patients suffer from kidney disease in the area around Khambhat. Most of them are poor. In many cases, their relatives do not have enough money to travel to other hospital in a distant town where there is an established kidney center. We at Khambhat hospital help to alleviate their pain by providing dialysis at low cost in our center. According to Dr. Kapadia, 50 current patients fall into this group, and they have to pay only Rs. 100 (\$ 2) for their care. The regular charge for dialysis is Rs. 500 (\$ 10). This center has been in service for last seven years, and nearly one thousand patients have reaped the benefit of these low-cost services.

There is a digital imaging center, where X-rays, ultrasounds, mammograms and CT scans can be performed. To date, more than 27,000 patients have benefited from this center. Being that the technology is digital, the reports are very accurate and they can be accessed from any place with an Internet connection. Doctors in America have frequently offered their input in the management of our patients.

A vaccination facility is also available at our hospital, since most of the population consists of farm workers who are vulnerable to snake bites, scorpion bites, and the rare monkey bite as well. We vaccinate these patients for Rs. 150; if they are unable to pay, we will treat them free of charge.

There is a separate center for diabetic patients. Diabetes is a slow disease. Once the patient gets diabetes, he will need to be treated for the rest of his life and this of course can put a significant financial strain on the patient and his family. We have observed that many patients unfortunately abandon the treatment because they are unable to pay. How can we correct this problem? We were able to appeal to people who could afford to adopt at least one diabetic patient by donating \$ 1,500 or Rs. 75,000. The result of these endeavors is that various donors from Khambhat, Bombay, and America have adopted 150 diabetics, and they will receive all of their necessary treatments, free of charge, for the rest of their lives. We are in the process of setting up a study, where one group of patients are adopted by the Diabetic clinic, who are getting free treatments, and another group pays for their own supplies. We are trying to evaluate whether cost plays a role in who stays compliant with the treatments, and whether less complications develop with those who receive the treatments free of charge.

Shri Maneklal Mohanlal Parikh hospital runs solely on the donations that come from generous people – 60% of the donors are from Khambhat, while the remaining 40% come from Bombay and America. Dr. Kapadia notes that in order to foster the spirit of giving, there are many social gatherings that occur in America, where people come together to learn about what happens at the hospital. Recently, a young female doctor in America donated \$5,000 which she saved from her marriage expenses. Mr. Ashok Parikh and Mr. Bharat Parikh, of Bombay, had come to the hospital because one of their relatives had been admitted here. They were very impressed with the services provided and the high quality of care, so much so that they donated Rs. 17,500,000 to the hospital. We have received donations from the Khambhat Lions Club and Lions International, to the tune of \$75,000 U.S. dollars.

As one can see, this hospital that had its roots planted in 1943, has evolved into a place where high quality care can be offered to anyone, whether they be of lower, middle, or higher socioeconomic status. All of these efforts are not possible without the help of our dedicated physicians, nurses, and the rest of the hospital staff. Our physicians include Dr. Kothari, Dr. Vakil, Dr. Sawailal, Dr. Vinay Patel, and others. The Local volunteer trustees in Khambhat are Devendrabhai Trivedi, Kiritbhai Shah, Navinbhai Bhatt, and Mukundbhai Patel and Jignesh Patel has invested many hours of their personal time and energy.

Although it is impossible to list all of the volunteer physicians who have contributed ideas or their time to the hospital, we must mention the efforts of Dr. Thakor C. Rana, a cardiologist currently working in New York who is also a native of Khambhat. Dr. Rana along with Dr. Kapadia and Dr. Shah has provided guidelines, directions, and advice regarding the development of the cardiac care center. These physicians review morbidity and mortality statistics from the CCU and ICU, and during their biannual visits, they take time to guide the doctors and the nurses about how to manage patients. They inspire the doctors and the rest of the staff to perform at a high level. Our driving spirit Shri Mohanbhai Patel from Long Island, New York has provided many months of voluntary services at CCC by staying in Khambhat and providing vision with his hard work and commitment. He has been constant source of inspiration and stimulus.

The team in America operates under Khambhati Charity International, which is a tax exempt organization. The USA officers are Mr. Kapil Shah, President; Mrs. Hina Patel and Mrs. Monica Patel, Vice Presidents; Mr. Gaurang Pandya, Secretary; and Mr. Vinodbhai Vapiwala, Treasurer. Mr. Indravadan Kapadia and Dr. Jatin Shah, PhD and many others are on advisory board. They have invested a lot of their personal time to make this organization work. Many other members of the organization also work very hard to keep the organization running. We thank all of them for their efforts.

If anyone would like to volunteer or give donations, please contact:

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