



CANCER INSTITUTE (WIA)

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NEWSLETTER

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COVER STORY

DR V.SHANTA | A HEALER. A PIONEER. A LEGEND

"TO LIVE IN HEARTS WE
LEAVE BEHIND IS NOT TO DIE."

- THOMAS CAMPBELL, SCOTTISH POET

A Life of Compassion and Dedication

In a world where medicine is often profit-driven, Dr. V. Shanta stood apart. She embodied compassion, altruism, and unwavering dedication to health and healing for all. Truly, she lived by the adage: "work is worship."

Born on 11 March 1927 in Mylapore, Chennai, to Viswanathan and Balaparvati, Dr. Shanta hailed from a renowned and educated family. Remarkably, she belonged to a lineage that included two Nobel laureates: Sir C.V. Raman and Dr. Subramaniam Chandrashekhhar. Her grandfather, an avid reader, was a pillar of encouragement throughout her life. Her education began at National Girls High School and continued at Madras Medical College, where she earned her MBBS, DGO, and MD degrees by 1955.



A Defining Moment

While working in the cancer ward at the Institute, Dr. Shanta witnessed the compassionate care Dr. Krishnamurthi gave to terminally ill patients. Deeply moved, she realized, "This is where I belong." This moment changed her life's trajectory. Instead of pursuing a prestigious post at the Government Maternity Hospital, she joined the Cancer Institute, then a modest 12-bed cottage hospital founded by her childhood idol, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy—a pioneer in Indian medicine. She dedicated her life to this institute, living on its premises until her last day.



Building a Legacy

The Cancer Institute has been fortunate or rather blessed to usually attract like-minded, service-oriented doctors. Dr. Krishnamurthi, followed his mother Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy's footsteps and was joined ably by Dr. Shanta, in transforming the institute into a 675-bed world-class facility. Today, it treats over 100,000 patients annually, offering free or subsidized care.

Dr. Shanta insisted that every patient—rich or poor—receive equal treatment and respect. She led by example, conducting rounds, dressing wounds, and personally writing case records. For her, true healing went beyond medical skill; it required empathy and quiet strength from the doctor to help revive the patient's morale. Her guiding belief was: "Fear not cancer diagnosis, but its delay." Over six decades, she turned this conviction into hope and healing.

The Quiet Revolutionary

In a world where medicine is often reduced to statistics, scans and surgical precision, Dr. V. Shanta dared to bring back the one element that could never be measured: the human heart. At the core of her remarkable life and career stood a truth so simple, yet so revolutionary—care is not a procedure; it is a relationship. The physician must become part of the family.

In an era of overbooked appointments and rushed consultations, she spent time. She listened. She remembered that at the heart of the word "healthcare" is "care." "Care is caring for the individual, like what you would do for your mother or father or child... Even when there is no hope, you have to give some message of hope to sustain them." She believed that curing patients went far beyond medical expertise, it involved the confidence and empathy of a doctor.

She often said that technological advances must not be adopted just because they exist, but only if they truly serve patients in a meaningful, cost-effective way. At a time when much of healthcare is becoming commercialized, Dr. Shanta held firm to the Institute's founding values: that quality care should never depend on a patient's ability to pay. "Sixty percent of our patients receive free or subsidized treatment. And regardless of whether someone pays or not, the care is exactly the same. No one is ever turned away."

Dr. V. Shanta's life reminds us that leadership is not always loud, that revolutions can be quiet, and that sometimes, the most powerful legacy is built not on power, but on love, integrity, and relentless service. Her story is not just one of medicine, it is a story of humanity at its best. Her presence remains palpable in its corridors — in the free beds for the poor, the counselling rooms for the grieving, and in that story, she will live on.

The Memorial Museum

Dr. Shanta's room at the institute has been transformed into a memorial. The museum is housed in her lifelong home—the top floor of the Gandhinagar campus. Visitors immediately sense an aura of calm and positive energy.

The walls, roof and the floor of the memorial aren't adorned with luxurious lamps, stained glass-windows and embroidered carpets, but there is an inherent sense of simplicity which Dr Shanta stood for, all throughout her life.

The museum features memorabilia of vintage black-and-white photographs of her childhood, her meetings with oncology luminaries, and interactions with India's prime ministers and chief ministers who supported the hospital.

The photos of Dr Shanta playing the Tambura and she engrossed in a game of chess adds a personal touch. The west wall showcases her highest honours:

- Padma Shri (1986)
- Padma Bhushan (2006)
- Padma Vibhushan (2016)
- Ramon Magsaysay Award (2005)
- & many more.

The centre of the hall retains its old-world charm of minimalistic yet tidy furniture where Dr. Shanta engaged with doctors and visitors.

A frail almirah preserves her personal belongings: pocket-sized diaries revealing her perfectionism and candid views, two pairs of beige footwear, fountain pens, plain white handkerchiefs, and an old-fashioned spectacle. These simple possessions tells the story of a woman clad in a crisp cotton saree, tirelessly toiling to change oncology care profoundly.



Honouring a Legend

On April 22, 2025, Honourable Chief Minister M.K. Stalin unveiled Dr. Shanta's statue and museum at the very place where she devoted her entire life to serving needy patients. The museum, filled with her belongings and ideals, left me deeply moved and inspired."



A "Work of Heart"

Dr V. Shanta's gentle assurance, her fierce commitment to justice, and her refusal to compromise on ethics made the Cancer Institute what it is today, a beacon of hope. The memorial is a fitting gesture to ensure her contributions are remembered as part of India's history.

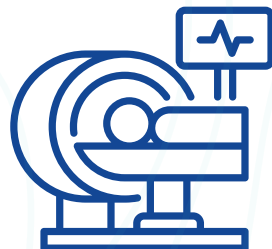
The memorial does more than commemorate—it resonates, inspires, and connects. It whispers the story of silent dedication and service, urging visitors to touch, feel, imbibe, and carry forward Dr. Shanta's selfless teachings.

This institution is truly a "work of heart."

– Compiled By Ardent Admirers Of Dr. V. Shanta

DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

DEPARTMENT OF RADIO DIAGNOSIS & IMAGING



Correspondent: **Mr. N.C. Vikram Babu**



Our department offers advanced imaging—X-ray, CT, 3D mammography, ultrasound, and MRI—for precise diagnosis. Board-certified radiologists ensure accuracy with fast turnaround, including same-day STAT reports. Patient comfort is prioritized through flexible scheduling and supportive care. Seamless collaboration with physicians delivers detailed reports and consultative support, enhancing timely, effective treatment outcomes.

The Cancer Institute's Radiology Department offers advanced services including digital X-ray, ultrasound, 3D mammography, CT, MRI, and interventional radiology. With board-certified specialists, prompt reporting, patient-friendly facilities, physician collaboration, and insurance support, it ensures precise, timely diagnostics. Combining technology with compassionate care, the department delivers excellence and reliability for patients and providers alike.

EVENTS

SPORTS DAY

Correspondent: **Dr. Nivedhyaa**

The Cancer Institute (WIA) hosted its annual Sports Day on April 5, 2025, at YMCA Grounds, Nandanam, with enthusiastic staff participation after work. Organized by the CI team under senior leadership, the event featured track and field games, cricket, volleyball, tennikoit, throwball, tug of war, and fun activities. Badminton and cricket matches were held earlier at Velachery, Madhya Kailash, and Adyar venues. Dr. Swaminathan and Dr. Varalakshmi supervised and awarded prizes, while CEO Dr. Kalpana Balakrishnan encouraged participants at key matches. The event fostered teamwork, inclusivity, and joy, uniting staff across age groups in a day of sports and camaraderie.

Badminton Winners: The Cancer Institute (WIA) held badminton competitions celebrating teamwork and sportsmanship. Winners spanned departments including Anesthesia, Surgical and Medical Oncology, HR, and Administration. Highlights: Dr. Srivatsa and Dr. Vijayamoorthy topped Men's Doubles; Dr. Neelam and Dr. Nivedhyaa won Women's Doubles; Annes Christina secured Women's Singles; and Senthil Kumar led Veterans' Singles.



Women's Cricket Winners: In the Women's Cricket tournament, the CI Nursing Team secured first prize with outstanding teamwork, while the Radiation Oncology team, "Rebels," won second prize. Both teams showcased enthusiasm and sportsmanship, with nurses and doctors actively participating, reflecting the Cancer Institute's spirit of unity, collaboration, and engagement beyond clinical responsibilities.

The Winning Team For Cricket Tournament For Women : The Nursing Team (First Prize)
And The Rebels (Radiation Oncology Team) Runner Up With Our Director

Gentlemen Cricket Winners: The Cricket Tournament winners were: First Prize – Rock Masters (Kitchen team), Second Prize – CI Super XI (OPD team), and Third Prize – Black Squad (Maintenance team). Players from various departments showcased teamwork, sportsmanship, and enthusiasm, making the event a vibrant celebration of unity and talent.

The Kitchen Is The Proud Owner Of The Cricket Trophy This Year



EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY 2025: HONOURING COMPASSION, DEDICATION, AND SERVICE



Correspondent: **Ms. R. Harini**

The Cancer Institute (WIA) celebrated International Nurses Day 2025 on May 17, honoring nurses' compassion, professionalism, and central role in patient care. The event began with a lamp-lighting ceremony, symbolizing hope. Guest of Honour Dr. Kalpana Balakrishnan emphasized empathy, resilience, and advocacy, while Special Guest Dr. Priya Iyer praised oncology nursing's evolution and urged continued excellence. A cake-cutting ceremony symbolized unity, followed by a cultural program showcasing nurses' talents in dance, music, and drama. The vibrant celebrations highlighted gratitude, camaraderie, and creativity, reaffirming that WIA nurses are leaders, healers, and pillars of strength, whose dedication profoundly shapes care and community.

EVENTS

OUR LITTLE WARRIORS!

Correspondent: **Ms. R. Harini**

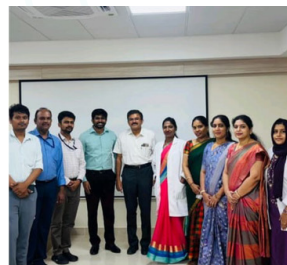
Thermoplastic masks ensure precision in radiation therapy but can distress children. The superhero mask concept transforms them into empowering designs, reducing anxiety and boosting cooperation. At Cancer Institute, a multidisciplinary team works to build a state-of-the-art pediatric radiation center prioritizing comfort, emotional well-being, and holistic care for young patients.



Superhero masks as per the child's choice- credit goes to our technologists & MDRT students

ADVANCING EDUCATION IN GI MALIGNANCIES

The Continuing Medical Education (CME) program on Radiation Therapy in Gastrointestinal Malignancies, held on May 3, 2025, was a major milestone for the Radiation Oncology Department. With 170 delegates from Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, the event offered a comprehensive academic agenda covering key topics, sparking discussion, debate, and critical analysis. It served as a valuable platform for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and sharing best practices in oncology care. Jointly organized by the AROI Tamil Nadu and Puducherry Chapter and the Cancer Institute (WIA), the CME underscored regional academic growth. The inauguration featured Dr. Arun Kumar and Dr. Rajesh, reflecting collaborative excellence.



CME programme conducted on April 26th 2025, by the Radiology department with guest speaker Dr. C. Amarnath MD, DNB, FRCR (UK).

TOPIC : Radiological evaluation of benign and malignant prostatic lesions.

EVENTS

IMMUNOLOGY DAY & TRAINING WORKSHOP

Correspondent: **Dr. Sridevi Duggirala**



The Department of Molecular Oncology hosted two key academic events in 2025. On March 26, a hands-on workshop on single-cell isolation and characterization for solid tumours trained 30 participants from leading institutions in protocols and data analysis for tumour research. On April 29, the International Day of Immunology was celebrated under the Indian Immunology Society, with participation from premier colleges.

Highlights included talks on CAR-T therapy for neuroendocrine tumours by Dr. Vinoth Kumar and the gut-brain connection in neurological disorders by Dr. Mayilvahanan Bose. A quiz on immunology engaged 29 participants, fostering scientific exchange and awareness.

ART ATTACK – WATERCOLOUR WORKSHOP AT THE CANCER INSTITUTE (WIA)



Dr. Kanchan, Professor of Oncopathology and skilled watercolor artist, conducted a five-hour art workshop at the Cancer Institute.

Staff and children enjoyed painting, learning techniques, and sharing creativity. The session fostered relaxation, joy, and inspiration, highlighting art's therapeutic value and strengthening bonds across departments.

Group photo of participants and their colourful creations.

EVENTS

HEALING THROUGH COLOURS: BHUVANESH'S ART BOOKLET

Correspondent: **Ms. Vinutha Suresh**

Young Bhuvanesh, under pediatric palliative care, found solace in sketching and coloring, turning art into a coping mechanism and source of hope. Supported by Dr. Kalpana Balakrishnan and the palliative team, his drawings were compiled into *Colours of Courage*, a booklet celebrating creativity, resilience, and the healing power of artistic expression.



EVENTS

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY, CHENNAI

Correspondent: **Ms. Revathy**

On World No Tobacco Day 2025, Cancer Institute (WIA) organized awareness activities under the theme “Unmasking the Appeal.” Events included a rally at Elliot’s Beach with 1,000 participants, sand sculpture, open mic, CMRL announcements, and online campaigns. The rally, inaugurated by dignitaries, united students, NGOs, IT professionals, and public supporters.

Cancer Institute (WIA) marked World No Tobacco Day with impactful initiatives: a sand sculpture at Elliot’s Beach, an open mic with 11 artists, anti-tobacco messages across Chennai Metro, and a month-long social media campaign exposing industry tactics, harmful effects, and promoting tobacco cessation.

Dr. Sundaramoorthy, Ms. Neha Tojan, and Ms. Deepika conducted tobacco control and cancer prevention awareness programs for 450 employees and 30 physically challenged women, emphasizing education, prevention, and community health impact.



EVENTS

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY, MADURAI

The Cancer Institute (WIA)-TCC, Madurai, marked World No Tobacco Day 2025 with wide-reaching initiatives.

A toll gate campaign educated nearly 290 vehicles on tobacco's dangers, while an Oral Cancer Screening Camp reached 50 individuals, offering counseling and referrals.

Awareness boards were also installed in 26 schools, promoting prevention among students. These combined efforts emphasized education, early detection, and cancer prevention, fostering healthier communities through impactful outreach and sustained tobacco control initiatives.



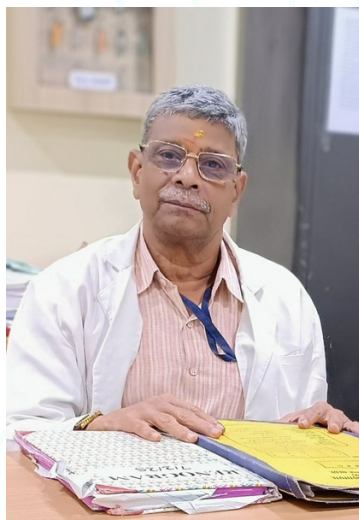
INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHO-ONCOLOGY & RCTC

Dr. V. Surendran represented the International Psycho-oncology Society in the 78th World Health Assembly organised by the World Health Organization from 19th April 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland.

THE TEACHER IN ME

A DOCTOR'S PERSPECTIVE IN NUCLEAR MEDICINE



As a nuclear medicine doctor, I balance science, technology, and clinical insight with a deep commitment to teaching. Beyond diagnosing and treating, I simplify complex procedures for patients, easing uncertainty with understanding. I share knowledge with students, colleagues, and junior doctors, believing learning gains true value when passed on. Teaching, for me, is not just information but illumination —lighting paths as mentors did for me. Guided by compassion, patience, and continuous learning, I grow as both doctor and educator. In every consultation and discussion, the teacher within me silently shapes care, communication, and connection, enriching my lifelong medical journey.

Dr. Krishnakumar. R
Professor, Nuclear Medicine

HALL OF FAME

Correspondent

Dr. Parathan. K & M.S. Kalyani Ravi

1. Dr. Krishnarathinam K

Lifetime achievement award
at THOT 2025 conference, Chennai.

2. Dr. Krinal T & Dr.Srivatsa R

Resident, Medical Oncology
3rd prize in ICON conference, New Delhi

3. Dr. Hanumitha R

Resident, Medical Oncology
1st prize in Quiz held during TPPOG
conference, Chennai

4. Dr. T.K. Balaji

Awarded travel fellowship for Intensive
infection control, 57357 Children's
Cancer hospital, Cairo, Egypt

5. Dr. Krinal T

3rd prize, Oral presentation on Tyrosine
Kinase Inhibitors in Hepatocellular
Carcinoma ICON conference, New Delhi.



The IARC Summer School, held from June 23–27, 2025, in Lyon, France, provides researchers and health professionals a multicultural platform for collaboration in cancer prevention and control. Offering interaction with IARC faculty, experts, and peers, it enhances skills through multidisciplinary learning.



Mrs. A. Parimala, Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics & Cancer Registry, received a full scholarship to attend the module “Introduction to Cancer Epidemiology – Part 2.” The course emphasized the practical application of epidemiological principles and methods in cancer control, focusing on identifying cancer causes and strengthening strategies for effective cancer prevention.

FEEDBACK

FEEDBACK & MESSAGES TO:

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