

# Women in Healthcare: Inspiring stories from Asia Pacific

**Dr. Jeyanthi Vengadasalam, Group Medical Director, Manipal Hospitals**



**Dr. Jeyanthi Vengadasalam** is currently the Group Medical Director of Manipal Hospitals SEA. She has over 32 years of experience in the healthcare industry and has passionately supported hospitals in achieving the JCI accreditation status.

HMA interviewed Dr. Jeyanthi and asked her about her achievements in hospital management and healthcare services:

## **What are your biggest achievements in hospital management and healthcare services in 2016?**

I have over 32 years of service in the Healthcare industry and my biggest achievement to date is when I achieved the JCI accreditation status for Pantai Medical Center, Kuala Lumpur in 2009. I was the Driver for this and no other achievement was greater than that, however again in the immediate year, 2010, I was sent to Gleneagles Kuala Lumpur to drive them towards this status. And this time, our compliance to the standards was near perfect, and I received fantastic feedback from the JCI surveyors on my leadership during this survey. Both these events gave me the greatest satisfaction and elation. Over the years, I had assisted a number of other hospitals voluntarily without any monetary gain, in achieving the JCI accreditation status. My passion continues to be in this area.

Since then, I would say my next biggest achievement was in July 2016, when we had a mammoth task of having to move a fully functioning hospital from our old premise to brand new building which is about 2 km away. The Ministry of Health informed us that our hospital license in the old building will expire on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July and it will only be valid in the new building. Hence we had to ensure that all our patients were transferred to the new building without any hitches, our operating rooms ready to receive cases and our labour rooms ready to provide delivery services.

This movement was planned with precision, and Failure mode effective analysis (FMEA) was carried out to ensure that all risks were identified and effective management was put in place. All systems

and process were duplicated in the new building; hence it was like moving a puzzle in a jigsaw from one area to another seamlessly. At 8 am on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July, the first patient was transferred from the old ward to the new ward without any hassle and we had three babies delivered on the same day!

### **What has been the most exciting thing that you worked on in 2016?**

The next most exciting event I'm now working towards is preparing our hospital towards MSQH accreditation. It was barely 6 months, and preparations toward compliance towards our MSQH accreditation commence in December 2016. I enjoy the challenge of putting systems and processes in place and see the transformation of the staff towards a culture of safety.

### **What are the main challenges in being a leader in healthcare?**

The main challenge is changing the habits and mindset of doctors. Doctors are the most resistant to change and over the years, they have established certain habits such as inadequate documenting, illegible handwriting, inadequate communication and the list goes on. However changing their mindset, understanding and acceptance that "patient safety" is a concern, they then change how they provide their service to one of safety in mind always.

### **What are the new technologies that you are looking to implement in the near future? Any tool or technique that particularly interests you?**

New technologies and tools, I would be most interested in is the APPS, that are now available for patients.

### **Finally, who is the healthcare leader that inspires you the most?**

Over the past 18 years of service in the private sector, I was lucky enough to be working under great leaders and from each one of them, I learnt so much. Everyone had their own style of management and had the attributes of a leader, however till today; the one person who changed my perspective on how a true leader should be was the previous CEO of Gleneagles Hospital Kuala Lumpur, Dato Amir Firdaus Bin Abdullah. His growth from a Radiographer to a CEO and today a CEO of a Fortune 500 listed company cannot be more overstated. However it is not only this achievement that inspires me, but rather his attributes of being most humble, down to earth and most of all a "peoples' person", and putting the patient at the foremost made a lasting impression on me. He taught me not to shy away from apologising to our patients when we are in the wrong and the times when he goes to the ground to even push a wheel chair himself! How many CEO's have you seen doing this in your lifetime? I take with me the many positive attributes of all the leaders that I had the opportunity to serve and I thank each one of them for teaching me how to an effective leader. Thank you.

To learn more about the healthcare challenges in Asia Pacific, join us on 23-24 August 2017 at the 16<sup>th</sup> Hospital Management Asia. This annual conference will be held at Shangri-La the Fort, Manila, Philippines. Visit [www.hospitalmanagementasia.com](http://www.hospitalmanagementasia.com) and register today.