



Indian Doctors Association

Greater Houston

June/July 2024 Edition



## **SUMMER LUL, PLANNING FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR**

Dear IDA Family,

I hope all of you have been weathering the weather and dealing with the unprecedented issues our city had to deal with. Between heat, hurricanes, and power loss, I am sure all of you are tired of this extreme weather. I hope and pray all of you have been safe through these natural calamities and recuperated.

Our events calendar is lying low for the summer (like we do every year) but we are staying cool and planning for us to get back in business serving

our organization's mission at the end of summer. I have been able to foster certain strategic alignments with other not for profit organizations both locally and in India and look forward to a systematic ability to collaborate with them to make an impact. As mentioned in last month's newsletter, I am extremely excited to be able to partner with SEWA international and facilitate their health education efforts. We are in the process of creating a list of topics and will be reaching out to our members to sign up for these health education events and potentially can offer health screening services. In the meantime, if anyone is interested to be a part of the SEWA international health education volunteer base, please feel free to email us at

[idahoustontx@gmail.com](mailto:idahoustontx@gmail.com).

In this newsletter you will find details of another organization-The Public Health Research Institute of India (PHRII) that we are featuring and fostering a relationship to be able to work towards their mission of combating cervical cancer. Lastly be ready to come out and mingle with the next LNE event coming up in Sugarland.

**Arvind Bhimaraj, MD MPH**

## **LEARNING AND NETWORKING EVENTS**

### **(LNE)**

IDA is excited to announce our Regional Learning and Networking events (LNEs) where our members can interact with each other while learning about a topic (that is applicable to all specialties).

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### **UPCOMING EVENT: BLOCK YOUR CALENDERS**

- **Sugarland LNE: September 21<sup>st</sup>.**  
**Topic: Innovative non-surgical treatment options for severe COPD/Emphysema.**
- **Medical Center LNE: October 5<sup>th</sup>.**  
**Amyloidosis: A disease that crosses every specialties path- Awareness with patient perspective.**

- **Woodlands “Fashion For Fundraising” event: Mid/End of October. In support of Cervical cancer screening efforts in India.**

## **KNOW YOUR BOARD MEMBER**

*Dr. Arusha Bhavare*



Dr. Arusha Bavare, Board Member of IDA, is a native of Pune, Maharashtra in the western part of India and moved to the United States in 1994 after completing her M.B.B.S degree from Bharati Vidyapeeth Medical College that is affiliated to University

of Pune. She completed her internal medicine residency and Geriatrics fellowship at the University of Texas

Medical School in Houston and started her career as the first woman Geriatrician with a full-time practice in Greater Houston area with a unique way of practicing medicine – Home visits to patients’ personal homes,

SNF’s, Assisted Living and Independent Living facilities. She also got her MBA in Health Analytics from Duke University in 2023. She grew her practice from being a primary care physician for elderly to Hospitalist Physician within Greater Houston.

Known for her commitment to her patients, she takes pride in practicing medicine the old-fashioned way and champions equity in patient care with

a focus on geriatric care for the elderly. Arusha has expanded her

Hospitalist business across 6

Methodist Hospitals within the Methodist System employing over 40 full time physicians and 20 NP’s. She pioneered concept of “Extensivist” for patients that need acute medical care in their home settings post surgeries and cardiac procedures by helping the hospitals to reduce patients’ length of

stay and readmission rates in the hospitals by leveraging her home visit team. She is married to Amod Bavare and together they share their free

time focusing on their health and passion for music along with their two children, two dogs.

## **PARTNERING UP TO** **IMPACT WOMEN’S** **HEALTH IN INDIA.**



The Public Health Research Institute of India (PHRII), a non-profit in Mysore, India since 2007, aims to enhance the lives of women and children through research, capacity building, and advocacy for evidence-based policies. Recognized as a Scientific and Industrial Research Institute by the Government of India, PHRII collaborates with academic institutions, public health systems, and local stakeholders. They are an NIH training site for Global Health, offering global training opportunities, led by University of Arizona’s Dr. Purnima Madhivanan and Dr. Karl Krupp.

PHRII focuses on combating cervical cancer, the second most common cancer among Indian women, causing 125,000 new cases and 79,000 deaths annually.

Despite being 100% preventable, India's screening rate is only 1.9%, compared to 75-85% in developed countries. Barriers include cultural resistance to pelvic exams, inadequate healthcare infrastructure, and low health literacy. PHRII addresses these challenges through community engagement and healthcare education.

PHRII is establishing cervical cancer referral centers to serve 3 million people, offering WHO-recommended screening protocols, including HPV testing with 80% acceptance from previous trials. They plan to screen 5,000 women in 2025 using a hub-and-spoke model. Funded by private donations and research grants, this initiative provides an alternative to long waits at government hospitals and overtreatment by private practitioners, serving as a proof of concept for other resource-limited areas.

PHRII is creating digital tools to improve health literacy among stakeholders, given that many beneficiaries cannot read. Improving access to trained pathologists is crucial for accurate pathology readings to track precancer trends and measure the impact. They collaborate with local and international pathologists to enhance their expertise.

PHRII also offers internships and volunteering opportunities to high school and college students. Over the past 11 years, they have hosted over 80 students from around the world.

Dr. Devanshi Somaiya is a U.S trained OBGYN, who did her undergraduate studies, medical school, and residency all in Houston. She served the Houston community as a minimally invasive surgeon at Kelsey Seybold and as the Chief of Family planning at the Houston Health department. She then moved to India in 2022 to pursue her passion in building a cervical cancer mitigation effort. She found a home with PHRII and currently works as a research physician and a subject matter expert in cervical cancer in Mysore. Dr. Subodh Chauhan, an ex-president of IDA mediated the connection and now after various rounds of meetings, IDA board is excited to partner with PHRII to support their mission. We are in the process of planning a strategic partnership that will include fundraising for PHRII, meet any of their expertise needs from our member base and explore opportunities of internships to PHRII for our members family members who are pursuing medical field. Look out for more this year.

## **WORDS OF WISDOM**

Submitted by Dr. Prashanth Gajwani

"Life isn't about how to survive the storm but how to dance in the rain"—  
Taylor Swift

Everyone knows Taylor swift—we don't need an introduction to her.!

**If you have a famous quote, you want featured in the "Words of Wisdom section please email to [idahoustontx@mail.com](mailto:idahoustontx@mail.com)**

**If you are interested in contributing content to this newsletter, please email us at [idahoustontx@gmail.com](mailto:idahoustontx@gmail.com)**  
**Any ideas regarding activities of IDA are welcome as feedback.**

**We want to hear from you.**

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## IDA Social Media



Members and events are highlighted on our social media channels.



Contact: [idahoustontx@gmail.com](mailto:idahoustontx@gmail.com)

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