

Appreciation: Dr Sarojini Perera

Dr. Lilani Rajapaksa
on behalf of

The Sri Lanka College of Sexual Health and HIV Medicine



The sudden demise of Dr. Sarojini Perera, a founder member of the Sri Lanka College of Venereology (later the Sri Lanka College of Sexual Health and HIV Medicine (SLCoSHH)), has caused deep sorrow among her colleagues.

Sarojini played a major role in the establishment of the Sri Lanka College of Venereologists in 1996 following the advent of HIV to Sri Lanka. The aim of the College was to advance the specialty of Venereology through the establishment of the Board of Study in Venereology at the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine (PGIM), University of Colombo.

Sarojini was a life member of the College and as a Council member held the offices of assistant secretary from 1996 to 1998 and treasurer from 1999 to 2000.

Her hard work and determination supported the college through many difficult times during its infancy. In 2014 Dr. Sarojini was elected a Fellow of the Sri Lanka College of Venereologists in recognition of her dedication and outstanding contribution to the specialty. She continued to work on behalf of the college

after retirement and never failed to be present at the college functions with her family.

Sarojini hailed from Bandarawela and was educated at St. Bridget's Convent, Colombo from 1955 to 1966. She entered the Faculty of Medicine University of Colombo in 1966, from where she graduated in 1971. After completing her internship at the General Hospital Colombo, she worked at the General Hospital Badulla, and was then appointed to the premier Children's hospital in the country, the Lady Ridgway Hospital, Colombo. It was during this important period that she met her soul mate and future life partner, Dr. B J C Perera. In 1977, she accompanied him when he went to UK to complete his postgraduate training as a paediatrician. During these two years Sarojini worked as a Registrar in Geriatric Medicine at the Crawley hospital, West Sussex UK.

After returning to Sri Lanka Sarojini served in different capacities at the Badulla, Ratnapura and Kurunegala General Hospitals before joining the National STD AIDS Control Programme in 1990.

Sarojini was awarded the Diploma in Child Health (1991), Diploma in Family Medicine (1992) and the Master of Science in Community Medicine (1993) by the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine, University of Colombo.

Sarojini contributed to the advancement of the National STD AIDS Control Programme in many ways. She contributed to the development of strategic plans, grant proposals, modules and guidelines, including guidelines on STD management and syndromic management of STIs, and assisted the conduction of external reviews of the programme. During this period the World Bank granted funds for the implementation of the second phase of the HIV prevention project that emphasized the

prevention of HIV. As the Coordinator for Training at the World Bank Project, she was responsible for organizing the local and international training of many health professionals from diverse disciplines including consultants, medical officers and paramedical staff.

After retirement in 2008 she worked as the Director – Programmes and Research of the National AIDS Foundation a non-governmental organization that addresses the health and welfare of persons living with HIV. She continued to maintain her links with the NSACP and this enabled her to help many persons living with HIV referred from the programme to the Foundation including pregnant women and children.

Sarojini was married to Dr. B J C Perera a well-known senior consultant Paediatrician.

She was a devoted and caring wife, mother and grandmother who was very proud of the achievements of her husband and only daughter Maneesha and grandchildren.

Sarojini was a friend in need. She was ever ready to help anyone in need of assistance. She was a humble and genuine person who did not see faults in others. Her wide smile and spontaneous laughter was testimony to her contentment with life.

On this sad occasion, we share in the grief and sorrow of Dr BJC Perera, Maneesha and members of the family.

May she rest in peace.

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