



OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE

I work as an Accident and Emergency Care Technician at CMC. This is my first job! Since the pandemic started, we step into the Casualty with faith and prayer. I have many doubts - is my patient infected with COVID-19? Will I get it? Will I spread it to my family? As a paramedic, we are trained to deal with crisis situations swiftly and efficiently. But now, things are different. Patients find it difficult to get transport to reach hospital. Their family cannot stay with them here. Stress and fear is all around.

Team work is very important in the high stress situations of the Emergency Department. I used to interact mostly with my fellow paramedics. Now I work independently with 2 nurses and 2 doctors. It forces me to step out of my comfort zone!



Ms. Sapphira

Once wearing PPE, I don't leave for a break, for water, food or even a bathroom break, as it means doffing the PPE and then repeating the safety measures all over again. In the heat of Vellore summer, the sweat drenches our clothes and the plastic PPE. Earlier, I stitched my own mask with cloth and a plastic layer in-between. Now we have an adequate supply, and our CSSD is sterilizing the PPE. **I am very grateful that we can protect ourselves and have a safe working environment.**

Last week I had an appointment to fix my dental retainer. Since I am working in the SARI area, the Department asked me to come back after 10 days. **Now I understand how our patients feel when others think they are a risk.**

One of our patients came into the Emergency Department gasping. Despite our best efforts, she was nearing the end. Due to the new protocols, we had to take her to the SARI area. Her husband was standing outside, peeping through the glass to catch a glimpse of his dying wife. I felt very sad that he could not be next to her at her deathbed. Even afterwards, her family could get her body until the COVID-19 test result was negative. At the end of life, **it is important to have your loved ones with you; to have comfort and dignity in death.**

Our patients come to CMC with hope and faith. They believe that healing will take place here. God heals and we are instruments for this. Even though I am so scared of getting infected, I realise that **we have to live with the corona virus. Please follow these simple steps: wear your mask, wash your hands. Keep your family safe.**