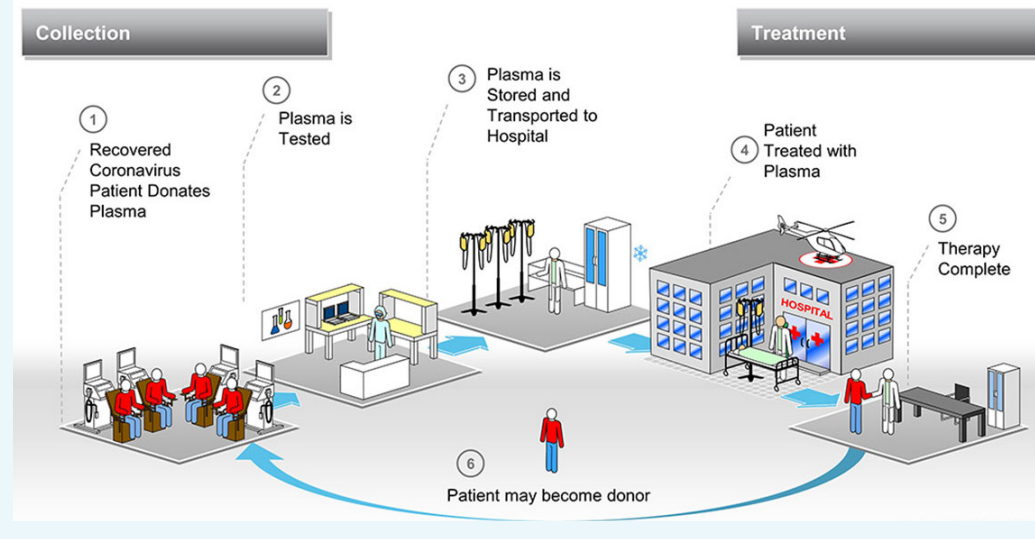


## Sewa International Launches 24/7 COVID-19 Convalescent Blood Plasma Registry



Sewa International launched a national registry for COVID-19 Blood Plasma. As of April 11th, the Sewa Plasma Registry ([www.sewacovidplasma.org](http://www.sewacovidplasma.org)) is the only 24/7 service that offers a national registry for both donors and recipients under the Convalescent Plasma Therapy program with live phone and social media support.

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## Executive's Corner

*Dear Sewa Families & Friends,*

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread across the US with thousands testing positive and hundreds dying daily. Despite the strict clamp down with millions sheltered in place, it would take weeks if not months for us to approach a new uneasy normal. Our way of life is in grave danger. one of the greatest existential crises of our times.

What can we do, and how do we respond? I am proud of you all, my fellow Sewa travelers. You have shown the way, and in fact you have guided my work and life these past few weeks. You have worked indefatigably, and some of you, and you know who you are, have not just risen to the task but you have become the embodiment of selfless service. My deep gratitude, appreciation, and thanks to you for your commitment to the good of humanity.

What are we doing in this time of need? You have already read some news reports about the work we are doing. However, I want to quickly summarize our plan/our goals for the next couple of months, till the time when we can see the world getting some control over the pandemic that emerged from Wuhan, China.

Sewa's six-pronged approach includes the following:

- Providing a Sewa - COVID-19 Help Line Numbers
- Supplying Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to healthcare and other essential services personnel

- Supporting International Students by making provisions for food & shelter
- Providing Case Management for individuals and families requiring long term assistance.
- Conducting Periodic Webinars with physicians, attorneys and other professionals
- Assisting and Protecting Vulnerable People by delivering essentials (prepared food, groceries, medicines, etc.)

We are already doing most of this, and we just need to keep fine tuning and expanding our reach and our work. Those of you preparing masks at home; those of you delivering masks to police and fire departments; and those of you taking phone calls from anxious, fearful people and offering them services – I thank you all. I thank my colleagues for initiating the "Sankalp Patra" program to collaborate with various Hindu organizations and to bring together our resources so that Sewa International can become the one-stop source for responding to this pandemic that has upended our lives. Together we serve better!

Sincerely,



**Prof. Sree N. Sreenath**  
President



## Sewa International Launches 24/7 COVID-19 Convalescent Blood Plasma Registry

“Our mission is to bring together matching blood donors and COVID-19 patients seeking the plasma, in-time and save lives, and we are open round-the-clock to serve” said Sewa International President, Prof. Sree Sreenath in a press release.

Sewa’s registry is a mobile enabled, fully functional, self-registry service with 24/7 live phone and email support that offers both pre-screening and donor-patient matching services. The registry includes status updates and email communication with an automatic status change intimation. Run by a dedicated team of Sewa volunteers, the services adhere to HIPPA medical data protection laws, and protects the privacy and confidentiality of the registered users (donors and recipients). “A dedicated group of physicians and technologists designed and developed this registry rapidly because they saw the urgent need for such a service nationwide,” said Prem Pusuloori, Sewa Director of National & International Programs.

Users of the registry can call (302) 659 - SEWA / (302) 659 – 7392 or contact via email: [plasmasupport@sewausa.org](mailto:plasmasupport@sewausa.org).

Convalescent plasma therapy is an investigational treatment under Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations (see Box) that physicians use to treat patients with respiratory failure from COVID-19. Results have been encouraging, and more and more physicians are opting for this treatment for their critically ill COVID-19 patients.

Dr.Hari Bogabathina, MD, Board Certified Cardiologist and Interventional cardiology fellow, from Louisiana said, “The medical community worldwide is hard at work developing several investigational therapies. Convalescent plasma therapy was consistently successful in saving patients with favorable risk-benefit profile during prior epidemics like the Spanish Flu in 1918 and the SARS-CoV-1 (older cousin of SARS CoV-2 or COVID-19) in 2003.”

Dr. Bogabathina pointed out that convalescent plasma therapy has been successfully used in current critically ill COVID-19 patients in China and that this investigational therapy has been deployed in the US under FDA guidance. “Early therapy has been found to be beneficial from prior experience with SARS CoV-1. Critically ill COVID-19 patients cannot wait until approved therapies become available. Convalescent plasma therapy unlike several other therapies is available now, only if we can streamline and organize a steady stream of donors who are COVID-19 survivors among us,” he said.

“We at Sewa International are using technology and human resources for troubleshooting regulatory and logistical bottlenecks. We are in a mission to help physicians and families of critically ill COVID-19 patients obtain convalescent plasma in a timely manner,” said Prof. Sree Sreenath.

### **WHAT IS THE CONVALESCENT COVID-19 PLASMA THERAPY?**

Convalescent COVID-19 Plasma Therapy is an FDA regulated investigational therapy where plasma collected from eligible Donors is used as therapy for a restricted class of Recipient Patients, both of whom have compatible blood type.

### **WHO CAN BE A PLASMA DONOR?**

Donor is:

1. Male or a non-pregnant female.
2. No prior history of Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV, or intravenous drug use.
3. And COVID-19 survivor with either one of the following
  - Complete resolution of symptoms at least 28 days prior to donation.

OR

- Complete resolution of symptoms at least 14 days prior to donation, AND Negative results for COVID-19 either from one or more nasopharyngeal swab specimens or by a molecular diagnostic test from blood.

### **WHO CAN BE A PLASMA RECIPIENT?**

Recipient is a COVID-19 patient who is acutely ill with respiratory failure deemed to benefit with this therapy after discussion with his or her physician.

**ARE  
YOU A  
COVID-19  
SURVIVOR?**

**YOU CAN  
SAVE  
LIVES**  
STRUGGLING WITH  
**COVID-19**  
by Donating  
**PLASMA**

**REGISTER  
NOW!**



+1 (302) 659 - 7392



plasmасupport@sewаusa.org



www.sewacovidplasma.org

## Sewa International Comes to the Help of Stranded University Students Across the US

The COVID-19 helplines established by Sewa International have been receiving calls from stranded and worried college students who are concerned about food, accommodation, travel, visa status, and more importantly, about COVID-19. Many other requests were received through email, or via redirected requests by Indian Consulate officials or through personal connections/network of volunteers. The Consulate was unable to provide visas due to travel bans imposed by the Indian government.

Volunteers have been responding to the calls and local networks of Sewa activists have reached out to help these students in "real time" as the messages get transmitted over a variety of social media and media apps, and the follow-up on each request is almost immediate.

Below, you will find information about some of the cases that Sewa volunteers have reached out to and helped resolve:

### West Coast:

The West Coast helpline received 21 requests from university students between from March 15 and April 11, 2020. One request was for getting medical help, and on request from Sewa, a physician called the student and offered some preliminary medical advice.

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## Sewa International Comes to the Help of Stranded University Students Across the US

Multiple travel related requests came directly from students or through the Indian Consulate in San Francisco. Some students were able to fly back to India based on information provided by Sewa volunteers. The West Coast Sewa team also reached out to many students to check on their needs offered help in finding accommodation and food when needed.

Some requested help for paying apartment rent or college fees. Sewa volunteers directed them to sources that might provide monetary help but offered help for food / groceries. In a couple of cases, parents requested family contact information so that their children can reach out to families in case of an emergency. The helpline volunteers found families who would support students staying away from their home.

### **East Coast:**

The East Coast helpline also received many calls. Two COVID-19 positive students from Jersey City requested for groceries and a Sewa volunteer, taking all the necessary safety precautions, purchased and delivered food and medicines to their home. In a similar incident, based on an email message from the Indian consulate, Sewa volunteers delivered food and provided some financial assistance to three female graduate students from Cincinnati.

Following up on a call received from a worried mother from Dubai, New Jersey Sewa volunteers delivered groceries for three weeks to her daughter and connected her to a Rutgers University youth group.

### **Atlanta:**

Atlanta Sewa volunteers helped trace a student from Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) as his mother called the Sewa helpline from India as she was not able to reach out to her son. They also helped clear a student's dorm room at Georgia Tech as the student was stuck in Oregon and ordered by the University to vacate his room.

A Bhutanese family that needed a laptop for their elementary school children to attend online classes was helped by a Sewa donor in Atlanta. A few International students in North Alabama got groceries delivered to them by a kind Indian grocery store owner from Huntsville thanks to efforts from Sewa Atlanta team.

### **Colorado**

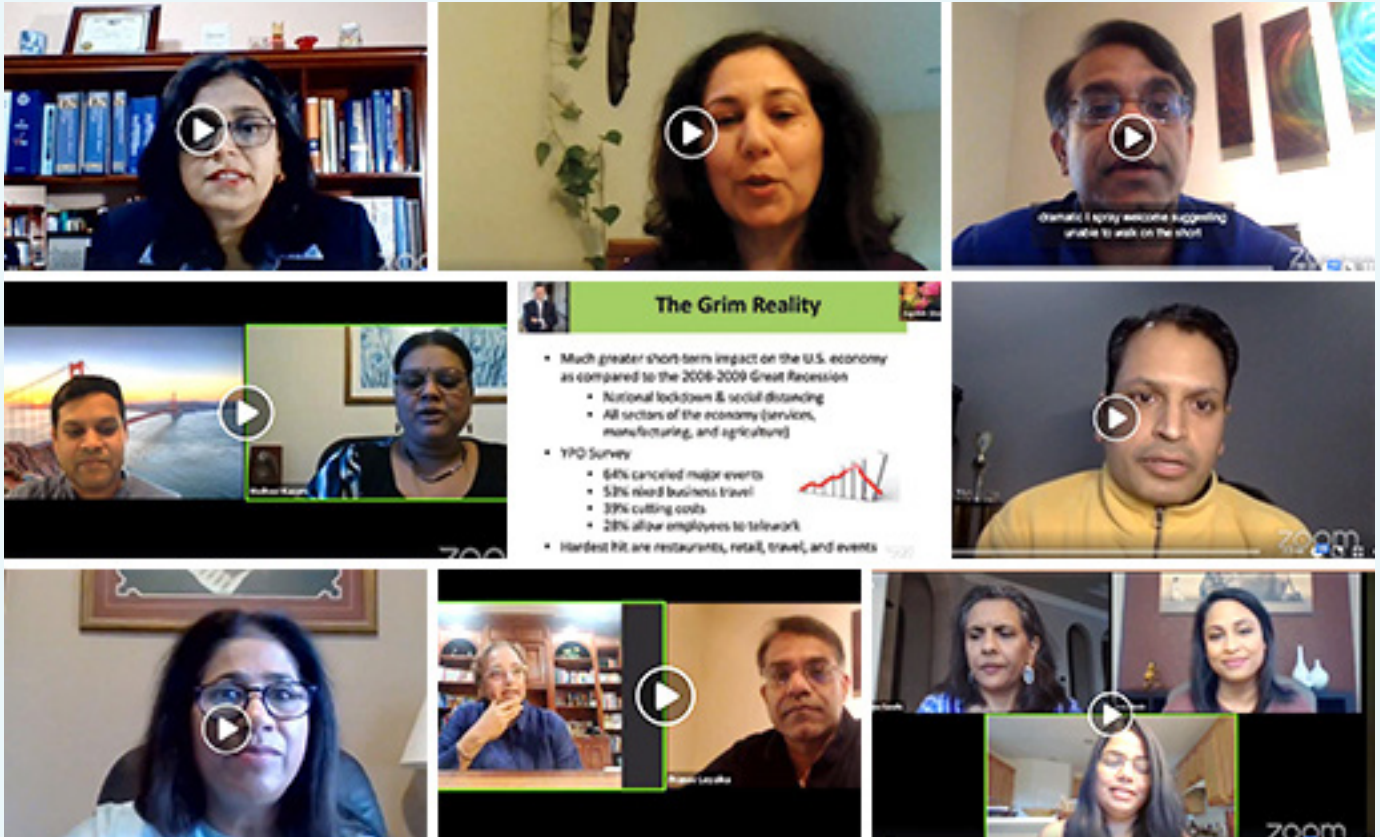
Colorado Sewa team helped a husband, wife, baby and an elder from a family who were displaying COVID-19-like symptoms in Fort Collins, CO. Responding to a call from the Indian Consulate, Sewa volunteers worked with the Larimer County health department and an Indian American physician to offer over-the-phone consultancy, groceries and moral support to the family. The COVID-19 tests results were negative and the family is now getting medical treatment.

Heeding a call from the Indian Consulate, Sewa volunteers also delivered groceries to three students and provided some help with their rental extension. These students from the Indian state of Maharashtra got into difficulty after their internship in a local hotel was ended abruptly. Sewa volunteers also delivered groceries to a few University of Denver (DU) students living in Denver downtown who were running low on money and food supplies.

Sewa helpline and volunteers received many thank-you notes from the grateful students and parents for providing much needed material or financial assistance in dire need. Sewa's ability to provide accurate information on various matters on the helpline came in for a special appreciation.



## Sewa International Offers Webinars to Help Sequestered Families



Sewa International has offered a variety of webinars in the past 24 days to help the beleaguered community cope with stress and anxiety created by the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak. Almost 20 Webinars have been conducted, with topics such as “Managing Anxiety with Meditation” and “The Art of Wellbeing Through Ayurveda” aimed specifically at lowering the anxiety levels and offering healthy alternatives for wellbeing.

Recordings of all these webinars are available on Sewa website <https://sewausea.org/COVID-19>.

To address the many questions that the Indian American community has about the pandemic, the Indian Consulate in Houston teamed up with Sewa International to conduct a webinar on a variety of travel, visa, and insurance issues. The webinar, titled, “Covid-19 -- Helping Indian Diaspora Navigate through Troubled Times” was conducted on April 9 by the Consul General of India, Aseem R. Mahajan, who gave an update on the coronavirus situation and responded to questions raised by viewers. In a similar webinar, the Consul General of India in Atlanta, Dr. Swati Vijay Kulkarni and Consul (Political & Consular) Shailesh Lakhtakia conducted a webinar titled, “Support and Guidance to Indian Diaspora during Covid-19 Pandemic” on April 10.

To help the business owners from not only the Indian American community but all business owners, Prof. Jagdish Sheth from Emory University offered a webinar on “Managing the Effect of Coronavirus on Small Businesses” on April 9. Prof. Jagdish Sheth, a world-renowned expert on marketing and consumer behavior, won the Padma Bhushan award this year for Literature and Education. The author of more than 350 research papers and a score of books, Prof. Sheth’s presentation was moderated by Prof. Ramesh Rao of Columbus State University.

A series of webinars on health and wellbeing included one conducted by Dr. Pranav Loyalka and Ramesh Hariharan, another titled, “Covid-19 & Kids” which was offered by Dr. Sunita Gulati and Dr. Shilpa Rajagopal. On healthy lifestyle and good practices, a webinar titled, “The art of wellbeing through Ayurveda” was conducted by Nagesh Kasam, and “How to Improve Body Immunity to fight Covid-19 with Nutrition and Lifestyle” was offered by Meenu Agarwal.

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Rajesh Sharma comes to Sewa International via the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS). As a HSS volunteer he organized many service activities. During the Tamilnadu Floods of 2015, he came in close contact of Sewa International while raising funds for the flood victims. Since then he has been involved in various Sewa International fundraising efforts in Central NJ for natural calamities in US and India through HSS.

Rajesh is currently coordinator of the newly formed Central NJ chapter of Sewa International and is actively exploring the possibilities of bringing family services and other tracks of Sewa International in Central NJ. The LEAD program that was launched last year in Central NJ has been very successful, being extremely active in helping underprivileged, veterans and senior citizens through various programs with long term associations. Rajesh is now trying to focus on other opportunities to expand Sewa International's reach.

He is very passionate about the Sponsor-A-Child program and his mantra to LEAD program participants is not to spend a dollar in the vending machine for snacks or carbonated drinks every day for a month but rather use that saved \$20 a month to Sponsor-A-Child on your own.

Rajesh has also been volunteering as a Swim Official with the Metuchen-Edison YMCA, Counselor for Boys Scouts of America, and with the Tri-County Model RC Airplane Club for many years.

Rajesh graduated from Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. He briefly taught at Math and Computer Science Department of Drexel University while working as a consultant to financial firms on Wall Street. Currently, he is working as an Enterprise Architect at Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

He lives in Metuchen, NJ with his wife Neerja, daughter Ashima, son Arav, and pet bulldog Doppler. Neerja works as a Communication Engineer and is also involved in HSS. Ashima and Arav are also very active in community service.

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## Sewa International Offers Webinars to Help Sequestered Families

Attorney Leena Bhasin conducted a webinar on immigration and visa issues faced by the community. Ramesh Anand, President of American Personnel Resources, a training and recruiting company, addressed the growing uncertainty about employment in his "Swimming against the tide in an economic downturn & high unemployment" webinar. Multiple webinars were conducted to address stress and anxiety due to the pandemic. Meditation sessions were conducted by Dr. Sheetal Shah, founder of the non-profit Deesha.org and Samani Punya Pragya from JVB Preksha Meditation Center. Multiple sessions on mental health and stress were conducted by Dr Bhawna Luthra, Janaki Amin and Dr. Deena Gandhi, and a session on "Practicing Gratitude During Crisis" was offered by Monica Cameron.

## Sewa Covid19 - Help Line Numbers

South West / Houston	(281) 909-7392	San Antonio (Metro)	(210) 595-0717
West Coast / Bay Area	(203) 872-7392	Phoenix (Metro)	(480) 630-1176
East Coast / New Jersey	(302) 330-7392	Atlanta (Metro)	(401) 484-7392
Mid West / Chicago	(847) 350-8311	Denver (Metro)	(303) 772 3576

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