

## **CAST-Eye Bank Special Session I: Variations in Eye Banking in Different Localities - Successes and Challenges**

### **Future-Proofing the Eye Bank**

Howard Cajucom-Uy YU

Like any other organization, eye banks need to formulate strategic plans to ensure its long-term sustainability and its ability to carry out its mission and activities for years to come. All eye banks will have at its core its main remit which is to alleviate cornea blindness through cornea donation and recovery of corneas for transplantation. However, as the field of corneal transplantation has advanced by leaps and bounds, so too must eye banks venture into newer areas to ensure that it stays relevant in these challenging times. Considerable time and effort must be invested to build up an eye-bank's open-container processing capabilities as surgeon reliance on eye bank- prepared tissue no longer becomes a luxury but a necessity. In addition, eye banks must be committed to conduct meaningful research to provide evidence-based decisions when shaping its own policies and procedures. Furthermore, eye banks are a rich repository of knowledge and technical skills. It is therefore a natural extension for eye banks to venture into training and educational activities to reach out not only to fellow eye bankers but to medical students, nurses, allied health professionals and even cornea surgeons. Eye banks must also develop a well-designed corneal transplant registry as the data captured therein becomes an invaluable resource for audit, quality assurance, clinical decision-making as well as for conducting high impact research. Finally, eye banks must be able to tap into a broader ecosystem of collaborators be it other organ and tissue transplant programs, research institutes, academia and regional and international eye banks and eye banking associations. Actively seeking out partnerships and collaborations ensures that an eye bank remains nimble, stable and "future-proof" in this highly globalized post-pandemic world.