

# 04

*Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country, doctors have led from the front, with tremendous professionalism and alacrity. At a time when people were being advised to stay indoors, doctors, despite the risk to their lives, showed courage to carry out their duties. They have shown remarkable fortitude throughout the pandemic and continue to be symbols of hope, resilience and a never-say-die attitude. From attending to patients without a break, to providing online consultation services for the last mile, the doctors ensured 24 x 7 care for COVID patients in their quest to save lives.*

*The fourth story in the series celebrates the doctors for their role and shows how dressed in their PPE kits they became synonymous with hope in these dire times.*



Dr. Devashish Desai, is a senior resident in Infectious Diseases in the Department of Medicine in All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. He and numerous health workers like him were at the absolute frontline, fighting day and night to save people from becoming casualty to COVID-19.



**“In the month of April, during the second wave of the pandemic, we sometimes had to be on duty continuously for multiple shifts, without having anyone to relieve us”, recalls Dr. Devashish as he mulls over the intensity of the pandemic.**



**“When life gets tough, the tough get going”, recalls Dr. Desai with a smile. “It was essential to maintain some semblance of discipline in personal routine so that one could withstand the long haul in the hospitals.”**

“As medical students we read about how devastating the pandemics in the past were. I never thought I would be living through one myself, and so soon in my career”, says Dr. Desai.



“I am astonished when I see people without masks, organising big gatherings. Do they not know how devastating their complacency and carelessness can be for them and their families”, says Desai, who himself has painstakingly followed COVID Appropriate Behaviour for over a year now. “Please don’t let your guard down even for a moment and get yourself vaccinated”, he appeals to people.

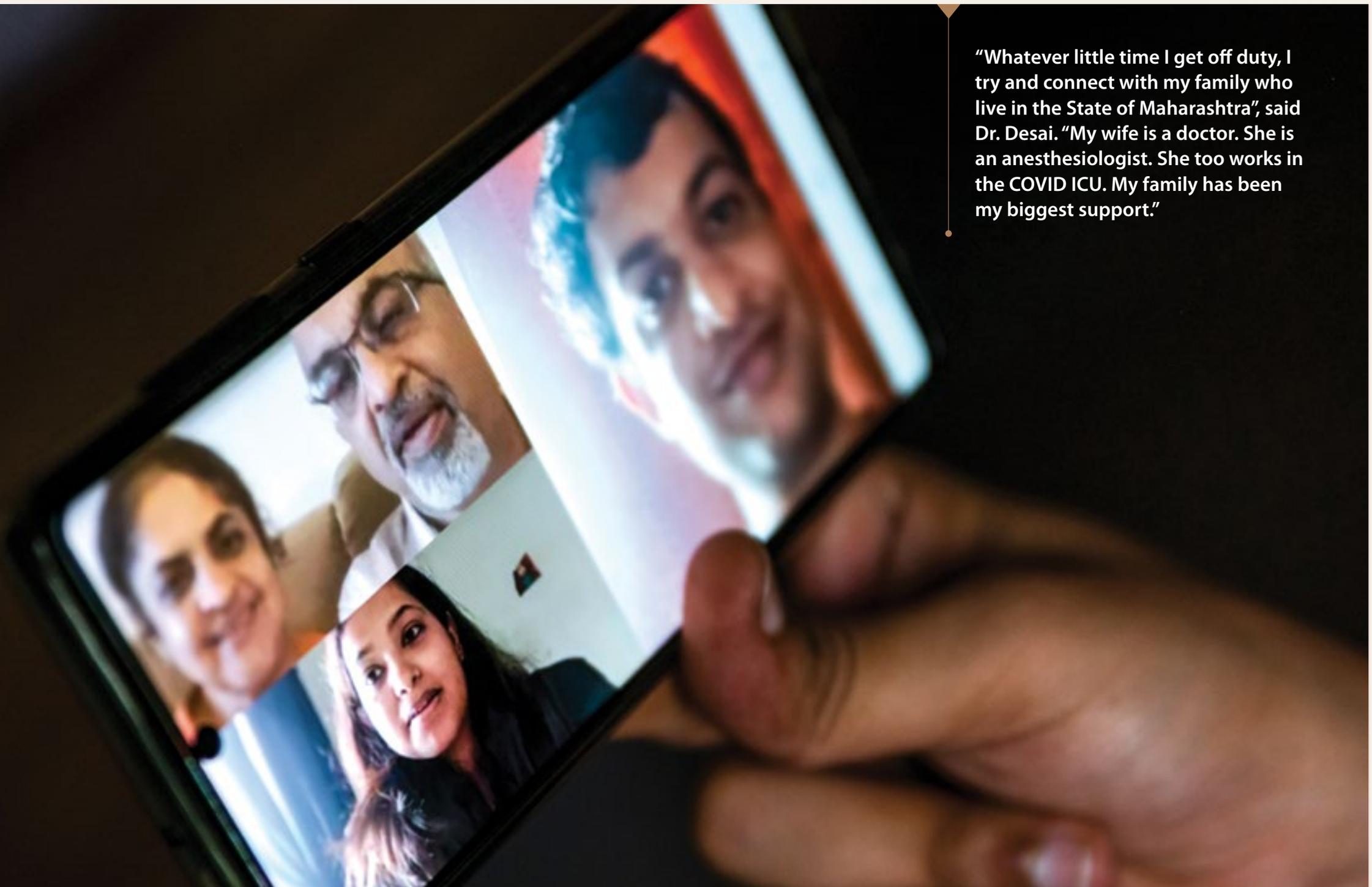


“There were doctors from all specialties — physicians, surgeons, orthopedists, gynaecologists. You name it and they were all there, working together as a part of one big team to provide care to COVID patients. They were all aware of the difficult situation, yet leaving their families behind, they were here to look after other people’s families”, said Dr. Desai.



"When patients get admitted, their relatives cannot accompany them. So when they are all alone in a COVID ward, we are the only ones to take care of them and their emotional wellness." Indeed doctors donned in their PPE kits became a symbol of hope for patients during the pandemic.





“Whatever little time I get off duty, I try and connect with my family who live in the State of Maharashtra”, said Dr. Desai. “My wife is a doctor. She is an anesthesiologist. She too works in the COVID ICU. My family has been my biggest support.”

“India as a country definitely has the capacity to overcome challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic. Everyday patients are recovering and going back home. They are definitely grateful. Our efforts have paid off in saving the lives and smiles on countless faces in the country”, said Dr. Desai

