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THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

Newsletter



APRIL 2000

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Postgraduate Medical Education - Relevance and Impact

Due to a dearth of programmes that can provide high quality clinical training to physicians, promising medical graduates often leave developing countries for higher education in the West. As many do not return, an important human resource of the region is lost.

Recognising the educational needs at the postgraduate level in Pakistan, the Aga Khan University (AKU) initiated its first structured, postgraduate training programme in general surgery in 1986. This was rapidly followed by similar residency programmes in other clinical disciplines. The aim was to attract top medical graduates of the country and help them evolve into healthcare professionals responsive to the current and future needs of Pakistan and the region. This would involve training generalists and specialists who could offer not only clinical skills and technological expertise, but also ethical professionalism, empathy and compassion in the management of the ill and the suffering.

In 1995, a decision was taken that all postgraduate training programmes be designated University programmes. This move was based on a belief shared by the AKU faculty and the Board that the training of physicians must include a strong academic and scholarly component, in addition to the clinical expertise obtained through involvement in direct patient care. Dr. Farhat Moazam was appointed as the first Associate Dean of Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME). The newly formed Department of PGME was given the responsibility to ensure that AKU programmes established and maintained international standards and improved the balance between educational and service components.



Surgical residents and Paediatric Surgery fellow at work in the operating room.

Through PGME activities in AKU, clinical training has progressed along lines that are unique in many ways compared to others in Pakistan. The programmes are structured on a North American model but with appropriate modifications that make them relevant to local needs. Trainees are rotated to hospitals outside the Aga Khan University Hospital to broaden and diversify their experience. Specific objectives have been developed for each year of training with gradually increasing responsibilities under consultant supervision. A uniform administrative structure, with designated residency co-ordinators/directors and representatives from among the residents, was established to oversee the training in clinical disciplines.

Regular evaluation and feedback of residents form the basis for their promotion from one year to the next. Members of a PGME Committee undertake comprehensive internal review of all programmes every four years to ensure that established standards are being met. A core curriculum of mandatory lectures and workshops for residents has been introduced. It emphasises not only scientific instruction but also education in medical ethics, communication skills, medico-legal knowledge, bio-statistics and computer literacy. Before completion of their training, all residents must be certified through a course in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), conducted twice a year by AKU faculty.

Currently, AKU offers postgraduate training in 23 clinical disciplines. These include Pakistan's first training programmes in the fields of Family Medicine and Community Medicine. Two-year advanced training in the specialities of Breast Surgery, Neurophysiology and Electrodiagnostic Medicine are presently the only ones of their kind offered in the country. All AKU postgraduate programmes are approved by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan and several by the Royal Colleges of the U.K. The last few years have shown a steady increase in the number of applicants to these programmes (30% in just last year) drawn from graduates of 20 medical colleges in the country, including AKU.

As of 1998, of the 245 graduates from AKU programmes, 68% are working within the country. The full-time clinical faculty in AKU includes 60 graduates of its own residency programmes.

In a relatively short time, AKU's postgraduate clinical programmes are beginning to reveal an impact on healthcare delivery in Pakistan. As of 1998, of the 245 graduates from AKU programmes, 68% are working within the country. The full-time clinical faculty in AKU includes 60 graduates of its own residency programmes. Several more are on the faculty and staff of other national teaching institutions, and yet others are contributing to healthcare as skilled generalists and specialists in organisations extending from Kunri in Sindh to Gilgit and Chitral in the Northern Areas. The experience of PGME programmes in AKU confirms that good quality programmes in the private sector can play a significant role in diminishing the brain drain and improving health delivery in developing countries.

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Participatory Community Development for Sustainable Health

The Urban Health Project Experience in Improving Health Status Indicators

The Urban Health Project (UHP) of AKU's Department of Community Health Sciences (CHS) is an integrated model of health and development initiatives in the poor urban squatter settlements of Karachi. This project has evolved in two phases. During the first phase (1985-96), CHS designed and implemented Primary Health Care (PHC) in five squatter settlements of Karachi. Each PHC site served a population of 8,000 to 10,000 people.

Initially, the project focused on improving the health status of mothers and children under five, and was later extended to families. Women selected from the community were trained as Community Health Workers (CHWs) and provided appropriate services in immunisation, antenatal care, family planning, control of diarrhoea, nutritional counselling, growth monitoring and breast feeding, etc. to assigned families. Ambulatory

Health initiatives included facility-based curative and preventive services. The community also worked in partnership with UHP to train the existing healthcare providers.

Outreach services like lane meetings, sub centres, health posts and health through schools were organised to provide health education to the population at large. Development initiatives involved facilitating capacity building of communities through a series of workshops and training on proposal writing, financing and accounting, etc. Women also received training on income generating activities and primary schools for girls were established in collaboration with local NGOs.

A comparison of 1996 statistics with those of 1998-99 showed some positive changes in the project sites. There was an overall improvement in intervention and control sites in terms of



Community Health Worker administering polio drops on National Polio Day.

facility-based curative services were also accessible to the entire catchment population of 50,000. These field sites also served as training grounds for undergraduate medical students. The project in this first phase had considerable impact on health indicators. The infant mortality rate (death of children under one year expressed per thousand live births), fell from 126 to 64.

The CHS's Urban Health Project experience demonstrates that empowering local communities, with the University serving as a catalyst, technical resource and intermediary between various stakeholders, is a stepping stone towards sustainable primary healthcare.

New project sites that were taken up in the second phase (1994-99), included intervention and control areas. Interventions of a more global and developmental nature like safe water supply, sanitation and income generation were also considered. Community involvement was emphasised right from the beginning.

Project intervention involved community mobilisation and formation of community groups to work together to identify problems, set priorities and develop plans for implementation.

broader socio-development indicators. More houses had taps inside their premises (up from 41% to 50%), fewer houses were using open fields as latrines (down to 5% from 9%) and there was also a decrease in the percentage of households throwing garbage in the streets.

On the economic front, ownership of assets (cars/pickups, motor cycles) increased. The percentage of women involved in income generating activities grew from 2% to 18% with a corresponding increase in their monthly wage earnings. The number of household structures built in concrete also went up. Significant improvement (from 4% to 36%) in immunisation coverage, especially appropriate for age, correct use of Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) including a rise in the usage of cereal based ORS, and better recognition by mothers of signs of dehydration in diarrhoea (up to 33% from 17%), was observed in intervention sites. Though not significant, there was also a rise in the contraceptive prevalence rate among married couples.

The CHS's Urban Health Project experience demonstrates that empowering local communities, with the University serving as a catalyst, technical resource and intermediary between various stakeholders, is a stepping stone towards sustainable primary healthcare.

Faculty Awards



Dr. Rabia Hussain and Dr. Zulfiqar Ahmed Bhutta.

The greatest resource of any educational institution is its faculty. The achievements and contributions to healthcare of two outstanding AKU faculty members were recently recognised by the President of Pakistan. Dr. Rabia Hussain, the Ghulamali Hirji Professor and Acting Chairperson of the Department of Microbiology and Dr. Zulfiqar Ahmed Bhutta, the Husein Lalji Dewraj Professor of Paediatrics and Child Health, were awarded Pakistan's prestigious civil award, the Tamgha-e-Imtiaz, on March 23, 2000, Republic Day of Pakistan.

After an outstanding academic record in this country, Dr. Rabia Hussain was awarded a Commonwealth Scholarship to pursue her Ph.D. in Canada. Her research work in the area of immunity to infectious diseases, an area of particular relevance to Pakistan and the developing world, has been recognised nationally and internationally. Her contributions include research in the fields of tuberculosis and leprosy. In collaboration with a team of international experts, she spearheaded research aimed at improving early diagnosis and developing effective vaccines for these diseases. Dr. Hussain has published 80 articles in international journals and participated in an equal number of international conferences. She is a member of the International Council of Infectious Diseases and a Fellow of the Royal College of Pathology, UK. She is also the Chair of the Research Committee, Faculty of Health Sciences, AKU. Her goal oriented research on mycobacterial disease serves as a role model for scientists in Pakistan and throughout the developing world.

Dr. Zulfiqar Ahmed Bhutta holds fellowships of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan, as well as the Royal Colleges of Physicians (Edinburgh) and Paediatrics and Child Health (UK). He obtained his Ph.D. from the renowned Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden. He has contributed extensively over the past fourteen years to the fields of clinical and academic paediatrics in Pakistan. As an educator, he was instrumental in developing the first sub-speciality graduate training programme in neonatal paediatrics in Pakistan. He is also the founder member and current Chairman of the National Neonatology Group of the Pakistan Paediatric Association. In recent years, several appointments to regional and international bodies involved in paediatric nutrition and perinatal care have recognised his academic contributions, culminating in the appointment by the Director General of the WHO to its Expert Advisory Panel on Health Science and Technology Policy. Dr. Bhutta has also received more than 25 externally funded research grants and has over 120 papers and chapters to his credit. Dr. Bhutta is widely recognised as an international authority on early childhood nutrition and infectious diseases.

Dean Sets Tone for Millennium's First Stone Disease Conference

Delivering the opening keynote address on "Stone disease in the next millennium – Where have we come from and where do we want to go?" Dr. Roger A. L. Sutton, Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, set the stage for four days of stimulating, thought provoking and controversial debate and discussion. Dr. Sutton and Dr. Jamsheer Talati, Head, Section of Urology, AKU, participated in the Urolithiasis 2000 meeting, held on February 13-17, 2000, in Capetown, South Africa.

Urolithiasis, the comprehensive term used to describe stones in the urinary tract, is common in Pakistan. A small, dedicated group of basic scientists, nephrologists and urologists, have been organising these conferences every four years since 1968. This four-yearly conference was attended by nearly 400 delegates from across all continents.

AKU also contributed a presentation on the reduction of radiation exposure during follow-up of lithotripsy patients (a joint presentation with the Erasmus University, Rotterdam), and four posters. This was based on work done at AKU by a visiting surgeon, who, on completion of his one year posting at AKU, moved to the stone section of Professor F. Schroeder's unit in Rotterdam.

The next conference will be held in Hong Kong in 2004, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Mayur Danny Gohel. AKU has offered to provide assistance in organising the scientific programme for the conference.

Interestingly, the logo of each four-yearly conference has demonstrated the creative strengths of every hosting institution. Canada overlapped two maple leaves in such a way that it formed a kidney in the area of overlap; Australia metamorphosed a kidney into a kangaroo, through a sequence of pictures that changed only marginally between one and the next; Dallas transformed a Texan armadillo into a kidney; and Cape Town drew layers of stone around its backdrop Table Mountain as if it was the calcular nucleus!



New Chair of Medicine



Dr. Raymond A. Smego, Professor and Chair, Department of Medicine, discussing management aspects of a patient's case with Dr. Bushra Jamil, Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine and Microbiology.

Dr. Raymond A. Smego, Jr. assumed the post of Professor and Chair of the Department of Medicine at AKU on February 1, 2000. The new Chair has over 20 years of academic and professional experience with a special interest in research,

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The Challenge of Injection Safety in Developing World

Unsafe injections are a major public health hazard in the developing world. The consequences of unsafe injection practices and their implications for Pakistan and the region, were discussed by distinguished national and international experts at the first national symposium on "Safe Injection and Blood Practices in Pakistan," held at AKU on February 15, 2000. The symposium was jointly hosted by AKU's Department of Community Health Sciences and the Safe Injection Global Network (SIGN), an arm of the WHO. The Pakistan Public Health Foundation and the Institute for Vaccine Safety at Johns Hopkins University sponsored the event.



Dr. Furrugh Ansari, UNAIDS, Islamabad, presenting his findings on unsafe injection practices amongst drug users in Lahore, Pakistan.

The overall objective of the symposium was to develop both effective and realistic interventions, by building upon previous national and international experience, in order to reduce the use of unnecessary and unsafe injections in Pakistan. The main objectives were to identify persons and a process to develop a protocol for an assessment, followed by pilot intervention that would pinpoint as well as test approaches which could be applied more broadly throughout the country. An important goal was to foster the formation of a Safe Injection Working Group for Pakistan.

Injection safety is of crucial importance to the developing world on account of the very high prevalence of certain bloodborne diseases such as hepatitis B and C in the region, together with the popularity and overuse of injections which are frequently unsafe.

The presence of all these contributing factors were highlighted in the presentation on the "Linkages between Hepatitis Infection and Unsafe Injections in Pakistan" by Dr. Stephen Luby, from the Centre of Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia, who was earlier an AKU faculty member for five years. Referring to studies he had undertaken in several parts of the country, he concluded that the main reasons for the very high rates of hepatitis C are poor clinical practices and lack of knowledge about safe injection practices on the part of healthcare workers. Other speakers also provided ample evidence for a dose-infection relationship between injections received and hepatitis C infection, leading to the conclusion that unsafe injections were a major mode of transmission of this disease.

Dr. Yvan Hutin, from the Geneva office of WHO, highlighted the impact of cultural beliefs on the excessive use of injections. One reason for the high demand for injections was the misconception that injections are more potent and work faster than oral medication. Quoting UN data, he said that

unsafe injection practices have caused 286 million cases of hepatitis B, 107 million of hepatitis C and 7.3 million HIV cases in Asia. Dr. Hutin further emphasised that physicians had to take greater responsibility for changing their behaviour and observing safe injection practices. Various other speakers also highlighted numerous unsafe injection practices. Dr. Asif Aslam, from UNICEF, stressed that lack of supplies and arrangements for disposal of equipment, as well as inadequate guidance from the government and training in the use of disposable syringes or injection safety procedures all lead to unsafe practices.

There was general consensus that only a broad multidisciplinary approach targeting technologies, systems, policies, standards and behaviour would guarantee injection safety. At the conclusion of the symposium, Dr. Sharaf Ali Shah, Director of the Sindh AIDS Control Programme, formed a Safe Injection Working Group for Pakistan, "SIGN-Pakistan." It is now in the process of identifying individuals both in government and outside, who can work towards achieving safe injection practices in the country. As Dr. Arshad Altaf, Senior Instructor from the Department of Community Health Sciences at AKU noted, "Although the obstacles are daunting, solutions must be vigorously pursued."

AKU Hosts SAARC Liver Study Forum

The Gastroenterology Section of the Department of Medicine at AKU organised the second meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Liver Study Forum on February 4, 2000, in the University Auditorium. The SAARC Liver Study Forum was established last year with the objective of bringing together the region's hepatologists to discuss the spectrum of liver diseases affecting SAARC member countries and to devise ways of combating these diseases.



Dr. S.M. Rab, Minister for Health, Government of Sindh, addressing the opening session of the 2nd SAARC Liver Study Forum.

This meeting was attended by nearly 200 delegates and brought together prominent hepatologists from Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. The theme was "Hepatitis B and C: Prevention and Treatment Strategies for the SAARC Region."

Areas discussed included epidemiology and prevention and treatment strategies for chronic viral hepatitis B and C, which are particularly relevant to Pakistan and the region.

Dr. Roger Sutton, Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, AKU, inaugurated the meeting. The chief guest, Dr. S.M. Rab, Minister for Health, Government of Sindh, underlined that "chronic hepatitis B and C infections are causes of high morbidity and mortality in our country and region."

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Advanced Nursing Studies Programme for East Africa – Will Open Opportunities for Higher Education and Professional Development

To mark its 20th anniversary being celebrated this year, the Aga Khan University School of Nursing (AKUSON) has initiated a Master's degree in Nursing to be launched in 2001 and an Advanced Nursing Studies (ANS) programme in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The ANS model of education represents a significant advance over the traditional methods of instruction and learning currently employed in East Africa. It will provide continuing and higher education programmes for working nurses, without requiring them to leave their place of work for long periods. Through a combination of innovative on site and distance learning strategies, it will use a modular curriculum approach. ANS aims to develop an international capacity to conduct relevant nursing and health related research.

The ANS Programme is being developed at the request of senior East African nursing leaders and the regional governments in consultation with East African nursing councils, chief nursing officers of major public and private hospitals as well as the Ministries of Health and Education. A senior AKU team led by President, Dr. Shamsh Kassim-Lakha, S.I., visited East Africa in February 2000 to take forward plans for the establishment of this programme in the region.

While commenting on the proposed programme, the Hon. Mr. Kalonzo Musyoka, Kenya's Minister for Education, said

that AKU symbolizes "quality education" and as such it was part of his Ministry's strategic plan to attract "quality universities like AKU to Kenya." This would provide students an opportunity to develop their careers at a high caliber institution at home, and reduce the need for them to go abroad for advanced education. In his meeting with the AKU delegation, Dr. Pius Ng'wandu, Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education, Tanzania, stressed that "the ANS Programme will promote career development and complement other health sector reforms currently planned." Hon. Chiduo, Minister for Health also offered his Ministry's support for facilitating the establishment of the programme.

Already the process of accrediting AKU is progressing well in Kenya and Tanzania, with technical evaluations expected to be concluded in the coming weeks. In Uganda, the Hon. Mr. Khiddu Makubuyu, Minister for Education and Sports and Dr. Abel Rwenderie, Minister of State for Higher Education noted that the accreditation process was moving forward.

Meanwhile, with the assistance of the governments and the AKDN institutions in each country, sites for academic centres have been identified at various government and private sector hospitals including those of the Aga Khan Health Services. Mr. Alan Myles of the Royal College of Nursing, UK, is assisting the faculty in curriculum development.



Led by President, Dr. Shamsh Kassim-Lakha, S.I. (fifth from left), the AKU team during their visit to Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, is in dialogue with the Hon. Dr. Amukowa Anangwe, the Kenyan Minister of Health (centre); Professor Dr. Julius Samson Meme, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health (standing); the Chief Nursing Officer and the Registrar of the Kenyan Nursing Council. The AKU team included (L to R) Dr. Grace Miller, the Director designate of the ANS Programme; Mr. Arif Neky, the Regional Chief Executive Officer of the Aga Khan Foundation, East Africa; Dr. Yasmin Amarsi, the Associate Dean of Nursing; and the Rector, Dr. Camer Vellani.

New Chair of Medicine

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particularly in medical conditions that tend to be endemic in Asia and Africa.

Pakistan has been home to Dr. Smego earlier also as he spent 1986-87 at AKU, and subsequently joined King Edward Medical College in Lahore, Pakistan, as a Fulbright Scholar in Infectious Diseases and Tropical Public Health. Prior to joining AKU, he was Chair of the Department of Infectious Diseases and Clinical Microbiology at the University of Witwatersrand and the South African Institute for Medical Research, Johannesburg.

Dr. Smego obtained his M.D. degree in 1978 from New Jersey Medical School, USA. After completing his training in internal medicine from Yale University, he moved to another prestigious university, Duke, on a clinical and research fellowship in infectious diseases – a subject he later took up as one of his fields of specialization. He also has a MPH

degree in International Health from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health.

With 158 abstracts and publications to his name, he has been editor-in-chief of the South African Journal of Epidemiology and Infection and is co-editor of the upcoming 9th edition of Hunter's Tropical Medicine textbook. The new Chair of Medicine has received numerous awards and obtained 43 grants totalling US\$ 2.29 million.

UNIVERSITY EVENTS

May-June 2000

Programme	Date
Annual PGME Conference	May 19 - 20
AKUSON 20th Anniversary Celebration Research Conference: "Regional Collaboration in Education, Practice & Research"	May 29 - 31
CME Seminar — Cardiology Workshop on ECG	June 13 - 15

Mola Dad – A New Breed of Teachers Reshapes Schools into a “Community of Learners”



Mola Dad with villagers at a community meeting.

Mola Dad's career trajectory reflects in many ways the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development's (AKU-IED) own growth. His professional development began when at the age of 19 he became a primary school teacher in the Northern Areas. Next came his work as a Master Trainer in the innovative Field Based Teacher Development Programme of the Aga Khan Education Service, Pakistan (AKES,P). This was followed by his acceptance into the first M.Ed. class at AKU-IED, when in 1995 he obtained his Masters of Education. Currently, he is a doctoral candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto, Canada.

Tell us about your time at AKU-IED ?

This was the time of my “transformation” as a teacher. I literally felt a change in my attitudes and beliefs about knowledge acquisition and dissemination. When I graduated, I was committed to making a difference in the lives of all those connected to the cause of education, particularly students, teachers, head teachers, parents and community members.

At AKU-IED, we learnt new and more effective teaching strategies to teach core subjects, such as English, Social Studies, Mathematics and Science. We received insights into how to bring about change in schools, conduct small scale action research projects to improve class room teaching, and how to improve school culture to create a “learning-friendly” environment. I chose to visit Canada as part of our course to complete a module of comparative M.Ed. work in 1994.

What were the most important ideas and concepts you learned?

AKU-IED's M.Ed. programme basically attempts at developing the individual in a more holistic way, particularly focusing on developing our reasoning ability, so that life can be lived more intelligently and examined critically. Therefore, concepts like reflection, critical thinking, suspending judgement, and inquiring in daily experiences were interwoven with the teaching and learning sessions. One of

the most powerful messages I learned from my professors was that they not only taught us concepts and ideas, but actually practised them.

Co-operative learning helped me a lot in my post-AKU-IED life. It brings people together and helps create a positive interdependence among them. I was amazed to see that it was in harmony with the ideas of other AKDN institutions like the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) in which village communities come together to set priorities and resolve their mutual issues through dialogue.

How were you able to implement these ideas in your local community environment?

I was fortunate enough to get a chance to travel to various parts of the Northern Areas and conduct workshops for teachers to introduce them to new teaching ideas. Two of the ideas I frequently shared with the teachers were those of “co-operative learning” and “multigrade teaching.” The latter involves particular skills for teaching groups at several grade levels in a single classroom simultaneously. During 1995 and 1996, I reached more than 500 teachers across the Northern Areas.

In July 1996, I was assigned the task of heading the first Field Education Office, established in Gahkuch, Ghizer, as one of the initiatives to decentralise AKES,P activities. There I had ample opportunity to try out various innovative ideas learned at AKU-IED. During this time, I was encouraged by my team's efforts to influence educational change. The real challenges that we faced were actually learning opportunities and were more interesting to me than the achievements themselves.

I also worked as one of the instructional team members conducting two eight-week Visiting Teachers Programmes at AKU-IED, especially designed for the mentor teachers from Balochistan. This helped me learn how to plan, execute and evaluate a teacher's development programme in another context.

What exactly are you doing now in Toronto?

I have been pursuing my Ph.D. at OISE, University of Toronto, since September 1999 and expect to complete in 2002. As my research topic, I am exploring the “Dilemmas and Challenges of Educational Leadership for School Improvement.”

What do you hope to bring back with you and how do you plan to relate it to the context in which you work?

I want to dedicate my life to the upliftment of education in the Northern Areas, where so much is needed to bring the region up to par with the country's comparatively more developed areas. It is my conviction that education is one of the most powerful ways to empower people to address their own issues and live peaceful, prosperous and useful lives. I want to live for and make a difference in the lives of all those who have a stake in education. My long-term goal is to come up with new ways of restructuring schools so that they are not places where only students learn but they are also learning centres for teachers, head teachers, parents, and communities. We have to reshape our schools as places for “communities of learners” and accord teachers the respect, dignity and social status they deserve.

I Have a Story to Tell – Teachers’ Stories Project

“After coming to AKU-IED, I think the most valuable thing which I have gained here as a teacher, is that a teacher is still a learner. And as teachers, we have to develop our knowledge through learning, and we can also learn more from students.”

- A teacher from a government school in Karachi.

The Teachers’ Stories Project is a recent research initiative of AKU-IED, which documents the personal and professional experiences of participants in the Masters in Education (M.Ed.) programme. Dr. Gordon MacLeod, Professor, AKU-IED, and Al-Karim Dattoo, Research Associate, are leading the project team, with contributions from Research Assistants: Shamsah Abdul Sultan, Aslam Aman, Irfan Mevawala and Saadat Mond. This project is a major research initiative aimed at studying the impact of AKU-IED’s M.Ed. programme on its course participants, and their subsequent impact on schools and educational environments.

The Teachers’ Stories Project also seeks to fill a gap in educational research in Pakistan by bringing together the two dimensions of the lives of teachers, the personal and professional, in order to understand and plan the professional development of teachers. The project documents AKU-IED’s contribution to the professional development of teachers and draws lessons for developing its current and future M.Ed. programmes.

In this regard, interviews of teachers (M.Ed. course participants) were conducted to gather information about personal and

professional experiences prior to and during their time at AKU-IED. So far, 60 interviews have been conducted, generating 1,537 pages of data – roughly equivalent to 18 books. In the next phase, the project will continue to track and collect the stories of graduates for two years following their completion of the M.Ed. programme, as they return to work as professional development teachers. The stories that have emerged so far are about change at the individual level and reflect the desire and commitment of these teachers to bring about change not only in their schools but also in their local educational environments.

Course participants are from Bangladesh, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, and Uganda and represent diverse geographical, social and cultural backgrounds. Each one brings with them a distinctive set of personal and professional experiences. The project is based on the premise that the lives of teachers do not begin and end within the four walls of the classroom and thus, their personal and professional lives are inseparable, each shaping the other. It also views the professional development of a teacher as a continuous journey and cumulative process, rather than as an isolated event in an individual’s professional career.

“Initially I used to hide myself as a teacher (as I was from a government school). I never used to (tell people) that I was a teacher. Now I personally inform (everyone) that I am a professional development teacher from the AKU-IED.”

- A teacher from a government school in Karachi.



AKU-IED M.Ed. students from the Class of 2000 in an animated discussion during the Teachers’ Stories Project.

SAARC Liver Study Forum

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Dr. Adeb Rizvi, Director of the Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation (SIUT), gave the keynote address on the prospects of liver transplantation in Pakistan. He estimated that nearly 4,000 chronic liver disease patients would require liver transplantation in Pakistan annually if this therapy was available. Major hurdles blocking transplantation were the absence of laws on brain death, a fact which made cadaveric organ donation impossible. However, he stressed that techniques of live, donor related liver transplant could enable this procedure to be carried out in the country.

The second session of the meeting concentrated on the epidemiology of hepatitis B and C in SAARC countries. End stage liver disease due to hepatitis B and C was a major problem in the region and deaths due to these infections were increasing in every SAARC country. In Pakistan alone, an estimated 6-8 million people may be infected with these viruses and are at risk of developing liver cirrhosis and liver cancer. Mutants of hepatitis B virus and co-infection with hepatitis delta lead to more severe disease and make treatment more difficult.

The session on prevention commenced with an examination of the status of blood banks in Pakistan. Data presented from

the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical College, Karachi, indicated that up to 10% of all blood donors are infected with hepatitis B or C. This makes blood screening before transfusion imperative. Unfortunately, blood banks are poorly regulated and most do not test adequately for hepatitis B and C. Highly effective and safe vaccines are available for hepatitis B but these remain under utilised in all the SAARC countries. An effective vaccine for hepatitis C still remains elusive. Safe blood transfusion, adoption of universal protective measures and education of the public therefore remain the cornerstones of hepatitis C prevention.

Data presented from the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical College, Karachi, indicated that up to 10% of all blood donors are infected with hepatitis B or C.

This event also heralded the formation and inaugural meeting of the Pakistan Association for the Study of Liver (PASL). The primary aim of PASL is to fight viral hepatitis in Pakistan through patient and doctor education, increase level of government participation in control programmes for hepatitis and research initiatives to determine the real impact of hepatitis in the country. These meetings marked an important milestone in the management of chronic viral hepatitis in Pakistan.

Financial Support for Deserving Students and Patients

AKU's Educational Support Programme was founded to assist meritorious students from underprivileged backgrounds who are unable to meet the cost of their education. AKU provides all deserving students, without discrimination, the opportunity to realise their full potential. Similarly, the Patient Welfare Programme allows the Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH) to reach out to those who might not otherwise have access to high quality secondary and tertiary care services due to lack of resources. The following are just two examples of the many needy and deserving individuals who have benefited from these philanthropic programmes of the University.



Nursing students at AKUSON.

Educational Support Programme

Ayesha and Fatima Kamal come from Karachi. The sisters have had no contact with their father, a plumber, for the past ten years. Soon after their mother died of cancer, he remarried. His second wife refused to care for the two young girls, who were left at a local orphanage, where they grew up.

The elder sibling, Ayesha, was determined to stand on her own feet and provide for both herself and Fatima. Ayesha had aspired to be a nurse and care for those in need, while caring after her mother during her prolonged illness. She applied to the AKU School of Nursing (AKUSON) and met the basic entrance criteria, but lacked proficiency in English and the basic sciences. After successfully completing the five-month Track I programme, which assists the applicant to overcome shortcomings in these areas, Ayesha joined the three-year Diploma programme. She received full financial assistance from the University towards tuition, accommodation and living expenses.

Ayesha served as a role model for her sister Fatima who also, after completing the Track I programme, joined the Diploma programme on 100% financial assistance. Both sisters are on their way to achieving independent, productive futures, committed to their chosen profession.

Patient Welfare Programme

Mohammed Iqbal was a fifteen year old student of class 10, who came home one afternoon complaining of unbearable pain in his shoulders and an abnormal change in his voice. His mother immediately brought her only son to AKUH's Section for Emergency Medicine. Dr. Shahid Moosa Baig, Neurology Consultant, diagnosed that Iqbal was suffering from Guillain Barre Syndrome, a disease of the peripheral nerves that causes numbness and weakness of the limbs. Iqbal was at once transferred to the ICU in a "life threatened" state.

Iqbal's treatment and hospitalization lasted four and a half months and his strong will and determination were instrumental in enabling him to fight this life-threatening disease. With almost no hope of survival, Iqbal refused to give up even when his future seemed uncertain.

The complete cost of Iqbal's medical care was Rs.1,243,000 (US \$23,018). Initially, Iqbal's mother, Soraya, refused to take welfare and it was only when her in-laws abandoned her that she appealed to AKUH's Patient Welfare Programme. Soraya had lost her husband when Iqbal was still very young. She worked as a teacher in a local government school to support herself and her son. On her meagre monthly salary of Rs. 5,000 (US \$92), there was no way she could afford to pay for Iqbal's complete treatment and hospitalization. The Patient Welfare Programme covered Rs.673,000 (US \$12, 643) or half of the total medical cost. The balance of the cost was borne by Soraya with help from her employer and a special fund of the Governor of Sindh. Today, Iqbal is no longer confined to his bed and continues to make progress. While he still needs a walker, he can now also walk unaided for short distances.

AKUH Leads the Way for Radiological Procedure in Pakistan



Dr. Tanveer ul Haq, Assistant Professor, Department of Radiology.

A highly specialized procedure, known as Vena Caval Filter placement, was performed for the first time in Pakistan at the AKUH by Dr. Tanveer ul Haq, Assistant Professor, Department of Radiology. This procedure prevents blood clots from travelling to the lungs from the lower part of the body, where it can then be removed by major surgery only. Blood clots often develop in patients who have been confined to long periods of bed rest. These clots can then cause sudden death by blocking the blood supply to the lungs.

Dr. Haq carried out this life saving procedure by inserting a filter, which is a metallic basket or mesh made of Ninitol, into the patient's inferior Vena Cava, the large blood vessel, to prevent the blood clot from travelling. Dr. Haq performed this procedure under local anaesthetic in less than one hour.