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THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

inspire

Innovation, Service & Patient -
Centered Research & Education

Department of Medicine

Volume 2 | Issue 4

Message From The Chair

Dear Colleagues,

I recently attended the American College of Cardiology Scientific Sessions held in New Orleans. We had excellent representation from AKU faculty and alumni. The conference is always a great opportunity to network, meet old colleagues and friends and learn ground breaking science.

In these last sessions, a couple of trials were noteworthy. The Apple Heart study enrolled 400, 000 participants in the United States over a short period of 8 months. Apple and Stanford created the study to evaluate Apple watch's irregular rhythm notification. A total of 0.5% participants received an irregular rhythm notification and 84% of the time participants who received such a notification were found to be in atrial fibrillation. This was a landmark study showcasing the potential impact of wearable technology in improving health care.

Two trials evaluating the efficacy of transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) vs surgery in low risk patients were presented with simultaneous publication in the New England Journal of Medicine. One showed non-inferiority and the other showed superiority of the TAVR approach. The clinical paradigm of taking care of patients with severe aortic stenosis has completely changed in our life time!

In this context, and in case of clinical trials in general, there is a dearth of evidence from our part of the world. Do our patients have similar outcomes? Do they have similar treatment preferences? What are the financial models that can support the translation of such technologies across the world?

Contextual evidence generation is the need of our time and our patients and we must prepare the workforce that can meaningfully contribute to achieving this goal. The launch of the research facilitation office by our DRC Chair Dr. Ayeesha Kamal and her team was a significant step in this direction. A mentor pool/think-tank is in the works.

Stay tuned!

Zainab

The Story of a Stroke Champion; Professor Ayeesha Kamran Kamal

Stroke ranks number three as a global disease burden after heart disease and cancer. It remains the most common cause of adult disability and one of the leading causes of mortality in the world.

While 80 per cent of all strokes are preventable, in Pakistan, the annual mortality rate per 100,000 people from stroke has increased by 40.9 per cent since 1990, at an average of 1.8% a year. Almost 350,000 Pakistanis suffer from stroke every year.

Our story is that of a Stroke champion. It is a story of a little girl who was born into a family of physicians. A little girl who became familiar with the frailty of life and the surety of death at the tender age of seven. This is Dr. Ayeesha's story. On one such day, Ayeesha saw a woman bring her extremely sick and ailing child to her mother for help. Despite her mother's best efforts, the child had severe pneumonia was far too gone and a little while later the child died in her front yard. Her mother tried CPR but was unable to revive the child. The woman quietly picked up her dead child and left without another word. Seeing how the woman's eyes were devoid of any tears at the passing of her child, little Ayeesha was struck and said to her mother, "She is not a good mother!" Her mother was furious and reprimanded her saying, "Never judge anyone; you don't know what they are going through!" That was a defining moment for Ayeesha. Going through life, she made that her principle. She never judged anyone after that day accepting that she didn't know their circumstances and tried her best to level the field for them.

As a medical student at Aga Khan University in the early days, students would participate in bagging teams over days as "proxy ventilators" on student bagging teams. AKU didn't shift anyone out in those days. Students would take up positions to bag those patients until another vent became available. This not only instilled ownership but also taught them about the significance of life. These deeply engaged moments leave a mark on impressionable minds. At 18 years, when you watch a child die because of diarrhea, a completely preventable disease, it leaves you frustrated with the disparity in healthcare. You are bagging a child that should have been alive. After experiencing that loss, and watching the staff desperately trying to save a child that should have never died, as a young medical student, Ayeesha converted her sense of injustice into determination; a determination to fight the wrong. Being a patriot, she decided that day that once she received a stellar training abroad, she would come back to Pakistan.

With this thought driving her, she went to Cornell and was one of the very few female graduates from Pakistan. She was fortunate to have a US Marine veteran as her mentor who instilled discipline into the fiery restless young rebel. She completed her Vascular Fellowship from Cornell. She then went into independent practice in Philadelphia for the next 2 years. She also served as Director Neurology ICU at the time.

Once she came back to Pakistan, AKU was her way to go. When asked, what made her decide to take up such a non-conventional approach to healthcare research, she related a story of her early days back in Pakistan. There was a lot of turmoil and instability in those days. A policeman had fought against the Taliban and he lived in an area that was a block from a school area that housed 7000 children during school hours. In retaliation, a bomb had been placed in his house and it went off 45 minutes before the schools were in session. As there was no mass warning system available, most of those 7000 children were en route to school at that very time with no way to warn them to stay away from a bombed out site. When she got there, she saw the school's headmaster standing amidst the ruins of his school. She approached him and during the course of their conversation, he said to her, "I know it's a terrible thing that has happened today but there is nothing stopping you from doing good." And true to his word, the school was up and running in a mere 2 weeks after the tragedy. This event inspired her and she went straight to the AKDN Learning and resource centre where they welcomed her and helped her realize her dream of the early warning system. Tragedy brought them together but instead of wallowing in it, they channeled their energy into making something useful a mass warning system for the school.

Although, she did not receive any thematic research training in a graded fashion, she was instrumental in starting stroke and research fellowship programs. She brought together transdisciplinary groups comprising of engineers, physicians, nurses, animators and initiated implementation science projects. Since a lot of knowledge was available but very little translated into mainstream behavior in lower and middle income countries, she decided to change that and has been doing so for the past 10 years through disruptive innovations. Be it becoming a nationally recognized stroke specialist, building international capacity or the Stroke research group coming up with innovative solutions like interactive prescriptions, non-invasive measurement of glucose, heart rate, atrial fibrillation or post stroke home survival programs, her agenda behind it has always been to level the field for the underprivileged population of Pakistan.

Professor Ayeesha Kamran Kamal wears many hats. She lives with her husband, a teenage son, a grey chartreuse cat and a big yellow Labrador, all in a joint family which according to her, has been quite enabling contrary to popular belief. She is, an enabling and empowering mentor and friend and a source of constant inspiration to all those who wish to be the change they want to see.

Department of Medicine Appreciation Evening



For more pictures, click [here](#)

Conquering Hepatitis via Micro-elimination (CHIME) Grant

Dr. Saeed Hamid (Principal Investigator) along with Dr. Adeel Khoja (Co-Principal Investigator) have secured an extramural grant entitled “Conquering Hepatitis via Micro-elimination (CHIME)”.

The study project is entitled “Implementing and extending lessons learnt from a pilot project, “Extension of Hepatitis C Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment into the Community: A Low Cost, One Window, Test-and-Treat Model for Pakistan”, to eliminate hepatitis C from a highly endemic, well defined demographic area of peri-urban Karachi”. This project is focused on Hepatitis C virus (HCV) micro-elimination from two union councils (UC-9 & 10) of rural Malir District, which is one of the largest district of Karachi. Moreover, this project is an extension of the Harvard

Medical School funded HCV Cascade of Care (screening, diagnosis and treatment) study, currently being implemented in rural and urban union councils of Malir District, which was secured by the same group back in March 2017. This newly funded project will allow them to screen 40,000 individuals for HCV, diagnose 6,000 for HCV and link 5,400 HCV positive cases to treatment to local NGO's and public sector tertiary care hospitals offering free of cost HCV treatment through involvement of provincial government. We wish them much success on this very important project!



***Department of Medicine
Pilot Project;
Electronic Attendance for
Grand Rounds & Meetings
Potential to sync with One45
Say Good-Bye to Manual Attendance
Sheets!
Just Swipe and Go!***

Department of Medicine in conjunction with IT, piloted the first ever electronic attendance for Grand rounds/meetings on Monday April 1st, 2019. We would like to thank the IT team (More specifically Mr. Akber Iqbal and Mr. Iqbal Tharani) for their continuous efforts in helping us realize a stream lined process of recording attendance.



The Department of Medicine Faculty Meeting was held on April 1, 2019. The agenda of the meeting was a Q&A session with the Dean, Professor Adil H. Haider. Pictured above are Dr. Haider and the faculty of the Department of Medicine. Dr. Ather Enam was a special guest! ☺

Department of Medicine at National and International Forums



2nd International Neurology Conference was held in March at AKU.

Many international speakers like Prof. Ashfaq Shuaib (Canada), Prof. Arshad Majeed (UK), Prof Khizer Rafiq (UK), Dr. Maria Khan (UAE) were in attendance along with our national stars like Prof Ayeesha Kamal, Dr Nadir Ali Syed, Dr. Mughis Sheerani and Dr. Sarwar Siddiqui.



Scholarship Collaborations

We were pleased to collaborate with the Global Clinical Scholars Research Training Program (GCSRT) and to offer three scholarships to leaders in health care delivery.

MEET OUR GCSRT SCHOLARS



ASISH SUBEDI
B. P. Koirala Institute
of Health Sciences
Nepal



VIJAYRAM MALLADI
Massachusetts General
Hospital
India



ASMA AHMED
Aga Khan University
Hospital
Pakistan

We are delighted to be collaborating closely with the Master of Medical Sciences Program (MMSc) in Global Health Delivery and the AI Jallia Foundation. The Foundation awarded a scholarship for one UAE student to attend the MMSc program starting this past July at Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Asma Ahmed is amongst the 3 recipients for Global Clinical Scholars Research Training Program (GCSRT) who were awarded the scholarship at Harvard for leadership in healthcare delivery.



Dr. Terence James Gibson, Consultant Acute Physician at Guys and St. Thomas, NHS Foundation Trust in London and Founding member of Pakistan Society for Rheumatology was invited to give a talk on “The Development of Rheumatology in Pakistan” at AKU in March, 2019.



Dr. Mehmood Riaz delivered a Public Awareness Session at the 23 Annual International Conference of Pakistan Society of Rheumatology (PSR). He was also a recipient of the 3rd prize for the oral abstract presentation.



Dr. Javid Khan delivered a presentation on Smokeless Tobacco Policy forum meeting in York, UK.



CME on Common Acute Febrile Illnesses was conducted at AKU on 22nd March by Section of Adult Infectious Diseases.



Heart diseases is an under-recognized yet a major cause of mortality among women. Dr Farhala Baloch participated in a live awareness session by FM100 on "Heart Diseases in Women" and talked about the gender specific characteristics of this disease.



The American Academy of Dermatology annual meeting was held from 1-5 March in Washington D.C. We received two scholarships to attend the meeting and presented two E-posters. Dr. Saadia Tabassum received "AAD Annual Meeting Registration Scholarship" and she presented her E-poster titled "Myths and Perceptions in Vitiligo patients: A Multicenter Study from Pakistan."

Dermatology chief resident Dr. Palvisha Qadri received the Strauss and Katz World Congress Fund Scholarship awarded by the American Academy of Dermatology for her E-poster titled: "Association of waist circumference with severity of psoriasis: A cross sectional study"



Professor Dr. Mohammed Wasay was appointed to the Prime Minister's Taskforce for Science and Technology.



Professor Dr. Javaid Khan was appointed as the Tobacco Control expert on the Prime Minister's task force on Non Communicable Disease prevention.



Professor Dr. Saeed Hamid has been appointed to the Pakistan Medical and Dental College.



Congratulations Dr. Om Parkash on being elected Vice President of Pakistan Society of Gastroenterology, Sindh chapter.

Featured Faculty Profile

Dr. Syed Ahsan; "Humility and patience are the hallmarks of a good leader."

What made you pick Medicine as your calling in life?

My strong sense of empathy compelled me to pick Medicine so that I may be able to alleviate disease and suffering.

What are your hobbies/interests?

I love spending time with my wife and kids.

Had you not been a doctor, what would you have done?

I would have been an electronics engineer or a software designer.

What advice would you like to give to your juniors?

Humility and patience are the hallmarks of a good leader.

What lessons have you learned from your seniors?

Hard work, honesty, professionalism, patience and a lot more.

What made you choose AKU?

The culture of accountability, highest ethical standards, and quality.

What in your opinion is your biggest accomplishment; 1 personal and 1 professional?

Personal: Completion of Hifz-e-Quran in 21 months

Professional: Promotion from Resident to Assistant Professor within three years

Tell us about 1 challenge/failure that taught you a lot in life

Challenge: Residency at AKU

Failure: I was unable to pursue Endocrinology despite it being my first love

Who/what do you draw your inspiration from (your muse if you may) and why?

My spiritual advisor as his company has brought me true insight about Islam and brought me close to Allah.

What are your future goals?

100% passing results, in first attempt, of all of my internal medicine postgraduate residents in all exit exams

What Are Academics Around the World Reading This Month?

-Emma Cartwright: The importance of choice between an insulin pump or multiple daily injections

To read click; <https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2019/04/03/emma-cartwright-the-importance-of-choice-between-an-insulin-pump-or-multiple-daily-injections/>

-What it feels like to be compulsorily detained for treatment

To read click; <https://www.bmj.com/content/358/bmj.j3546>

-Brexit has already irreparably damaged research

To read click; https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-01060-6?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_content=organic&utm_campaign=NGMT_2_JAL_Nature

-Adjunctive Intermittent Pneumatic Compression for Venous Thromboprophylaxis

To read click; <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa1816150>

-A Dangerous Detour

To read click; <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMcp1803916>

-Court ruling highlights the threat of vaccine misinformation

To read click; https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-01031-x?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_content=organic&utm_campaign=NGMT_2_JAL_Nature

Events Around the Corner

Department of Medicine

Are You Practically Perfect?
An Introduction to Self Efficacy

GUEST LECTURE

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- > Understand the concept of self efficacy.
- > Understand what affects self efficacy.
- > Know Self efficacy of providers as related to complex case management in health care.
- > Understand Self efficacy as a motivational tool.
- > Identify factors to improve self efficacy : Person and team.



SPEAKER



Uzma Khan M.D

Professor of Medicine
Cosmopolitan International Diabetes
& Endocrinology Center
One Hospital Drive
Columbia, Missouri

Monday, April 8, 2019
08:15 am to 09:15 am
AKU Auditorium

Publications

Cardiovascular disease risk factors in Pakistani population with newly diagnosed Type 2 diabetes mellitus: A cross-sectional study of selected family practitioner clinics in four provinces of Pakistan (CardiP Study)

Syed Abbas Raza, Mariam Hassan, Farhana Badar, Farah Rasheed, Fouzia Meerza, Sumeyya Azam, Ali Jawa, Imtiaz Hassan, Faisal Masood Qureshi, Zakir Alvi, Saeed Ahmed Mahar, Azizul Hasan Aamir, Rauf Niazi, **Najmul Islam**
In J Pak Med Assoc Vol. 69, No. 3, March 2019

Growing Evidence for the Impact of Air Pollution on Depression

Naureen A. Ali, **Adeel Khoja**

Ochsner Journal 19:4, 2019

Understanding Constipation: A Cross-sectional Study from a Developing Country Setting

Minaz Mawani, Abdul Azeem, Sakina Gheewala, **Nazish Butt** and **Shahab Abid**

In Journal of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan 2019, Vol. 29 (3): 284-286

Developing Normative Reference Values for Nerve Conduction Studies of Commonly Tested Nerves among a Sample Pakistani Population

Zaitoon Shivji, Anita Jabeen, **Safia Awan**, **Sara Khan**

In J Neurosci Rural Pract 2019;10:178-84.

We welcome submissions to “inspire” at bisma.imtiaz@aku.edu and samad.zainab@aku.edu

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