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THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

inspire

Innovation, Service & Patient -
Centered Research & Education

Department of Medicine

Volume 3 | Issue 11

Message from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

As we draw into the last quarter of a year that has thrown at us many curved balls, I can't but reflect on the amazing team work, agility and adaptability that you all have displayed in the last few months. Thanksgiving will be celebrated in the US at the end of this month. In a team like you, I have much to be thankful for.

The varied responses to COVID19 crises around the world have demonstrated to us that in times of crisis, strong leadership, that can be data driven and be able to think and act quickly at the same time, is of utmost importance. Having been involved with multiple behind-the-scenes decision-making fora, I will say that it has been a privilege to watch Dean Adil Haider and interim CEO, Shagufta Hasan provide reasoned guidance and take quick action to safeguard patients and healthcare workers safety alike. That approach trickles down. Our response has been nothing short of outstanding and it has been in no small part due to all of you and your personal leadership in each sphere. In addition, a big shout out to Associate Dean Dr Fazal Hameed and IM Service Line Chief Aysha Almas for their unflappable support and unflagging spirit.

With thanks,
Zainab

Medicine at National and International Forums



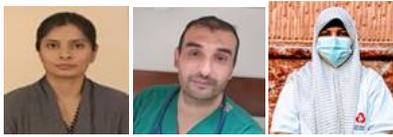
To commemorate World Alzheimer's Day (September 21) our Neurology Section helped organize an online International seminar on Alzheimer's and other dementias. This seminar was led by Professor Dr. Wasay, who discussed the management of dementia. Other leading experts from around the region in attendance were, Dr Fowzia Siddiqui, Clinical Faculty at AKU, Dr Keira Joann, Regional Medical Director, from Singapore, Dr Man Mohan Mehndiratta, Director, Professor & HOD Neurology, from New Delhi and the Chief Guest Prof Dr Saleem Barech, President of PSN (Pakistan Society of Neurology) faculty member at Bolan University, Quetta. The event highlighted risk factors of dementia such as traumatic brain injury, alcohol consumption and air pollution and how one could prevent or slow the development of Alzheimer's by altering life styles and ensuring safety precautions were taken especially, on the



Healthcare heroes !

- Dr Naqibullah
- Dr Kiren Habib
- Dr S M Hassan

Thank you for your selfless efforts in managing COVID-19 units!



Healthcare heroes!

- Dr Aisha Ilyas
- Dr Zaheeruddin Salah
- Dr Safia Akhlaq

Thank you for your selfless efforts in managing COVID-19 units!

In Depth- Section: featuring Dr Asif Imam

by Fatima Farrukh



According to the WHO, half of the world's population does not have access to primary health care. Pakistan's healthcare system consists of 600 rural health centers and 7500 basic health units established across the country. These numbers are still grossly insufficient for the 210 million people living below the poverty line. Overcoming this situation, has been a challenge for the government and NGOs alike. We recently talked to Dr Asif Imam who is part-time faculty in the Department of Medicine and who has made a considerable dent in this space. Dr. Asif Imam is the chairman and founder of SINA, a nonprofit organization providing quality primary healthcare to the underprivileged people of Pakistan, and an immunologist at the Aga Khan University. Although he is a US certified allergist, he has always had a

passion for primary health care which, he says, he owes to his father. Also a doctor in Karachi, Dr. Asif's father always emphasized the importance of serving people. Recognizing the shortcomings of the healthcare system of Pakistan, Dr. Asif has worked tirelessly on the herculean task of providing accessible, equitable health care to communities throughout Pakistan.

Dr. Asif Imam graduated from Dow Medical College in 1976 and thereafter went to the US for further training. After practicing in the United States for 12 years as Director of Integrated Clinical Research in California, he realized his true calling was to give back to Pakistan. After his return to Pakistan in 1998, he developed a small prototype clinic in Baldia Town. This idea further developed and led to the establishment of SINA health which provides free of cost and convenient access to health care services to the people of Karachi through various clinics set up across the city.

Dr. Asif Imam is currently working with an expert panel of 24 doctors to establish an end-to-end digital platform that will be used to facilitate development and training modules for healthcare workers. This scalable system will serve as a vehicle to provide primary health care services all over Pakistan and can further be utilized by the WHO in other developing countries. It has been tried and tested in SINA Healthcare unit and proven to be quite effective with advanced algorithms to help make a proper diagnosis in clinical settings. A number of pilot projects are set to be conducted in Karachi.

Dr. Imam believes establishing a robust system is essential for the success of primary health care in Pakistan. Capacity building, training and utilization of resources by facilitating trained personnel is crucial for sustainability, as is strong leadership, proper monitoring and evaluation to establish accountability. Dr Imam believes that the ideology behind these processes is to "facilitate a shift from a doctor-centered to a patient-centered healthcare system". Dr Asif Imam's work towards the vision of building an efficient primary healthcare system in Pakistan, providing free of cost and accessible healthcare to every single person is truly inspiring and we are so glad that he is part of the Department of Medicine team.



Featured Faculty: Dr. Farhala Baloch

"...Remain dedicated, stay persistent and be honest with your goals both here and after..."

What made you pick Medicine as your calling in life? Any experience to be specific.

I would say it was partly a “Go with the flow” decision as my elder siblings were already studying medicine and it was the dearest subject to me at that time. My diabetic father suffered a major heart attack in 1998, and my eldest sister, a third year medical student at that time was the only one who picked his symptoms and rushed him to emergency. That event also served as a strong reason to choose medicine as a field.

What are your hobbies/interests?

Spending quality time with family and friends and reading articles related to the medical field and stories especially that are patients’ narratives. I am also much interested in watching short crime investigation movies. I like to cook as well for my family and friends. I have a passion for interior decoration and above all I love spending time with my son Muhammad Bin Anzar.

What made you choose AKU?

My brother Dr Naveed Baloch (Orthopedic and sports surgeon AKUH) is the reason behind this decision. He chose AKU as an institute because it possesses a high quality academic and professional environment and excels in health care. He was the first among us siblings to join AKU followed by me and my sister Dr Shumaila.

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

I never thought of this honestly...

What advice would you like to give to your juniors?

Work hard and harder and even harder. No doubt you need to work smart as well but I feel that working smart lets you achieve your goals, while working hard lets you sustain the achievements. Remain dedicated, stay persistent and be honest with your goals both here and after.

What lessons have you learned from your seniors?

I have learnt honesty and utmost dedication towards my patients from my seniors. They taught me how to be disciplined, decent and modest while in competition with others (avoid pulling legs), and they have given me confidence. I have learnt cardiology from my teachers. I would like to sincerely say ‘thank you’ to all my seniors.

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

My biggest personal accomplishment is my life partner Anzar Ahmed and our son Muhammad. My biggest professional accomplishment is perhaps yet to be achieved; no doubt I am grateful to the Almighty for each and every success that I have attained so far.

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

There are many. I have learnt many lessons in life and I am still learning. The year 2019 was a challenge for me. My son was born prior to his date and was really low weight and at the same time I was beginning my new career. But by the grace of the Almighty I managed through and I have realized and strongly believe that ‘Nothing is impossible if you are determined and well supported’.

Any interesting/memorable encounter?

This memorable encounter was related to my abstract presentation in a conference held in Saudi Arabia, back in 2016. To my utter surprise, I met Dr Robert O. Bonow, Max and Lily Goldberg Distinguished Professor of cardiology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, the pioneer of cardiovascular medicine and the world’s most influential cardiologists, also Editor-in-Chief of JAMA’s JAMA Cardiology; I felt truly blessed to meet this amazing personality.

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

My parents, siblings and I myself, are the chief source of inspiration. The field of medicine that my siblings and I chose to tread on has set our foundation to an amazing career and has made our lives even more meaningful.

What are your future goals?

In future I would like to be an ACHD specialist (by Allah’s will)

What are Academics Around the World Reading This Month?

[A multiple therapy hypothesis for treatment of COVID-19 patients](#)

[Plasma Proteomics Identify Biomarkers and Pathogenesis of COVID-19](#)

[Evaluation of vitamin-producing and immunomodulatory lactic acid bacteria as a potential co-adjuvant for cancer therapy in a mouse model](#)

[Association between anthropometry and lifestyle factors and risk of B cell lymphoma: an exposome wide analysis](#)

[Enhancing the fungicidal activity of amphotericin B via vacuole disruption by benzyl isothiocyanate, a cruciferous plant constituent](#)

[Th22 response induced by Mycobacterium tuberculosis strains is closely related to severity of pulmonary lesions and bacillary load in patients with multidrug-resistant tuberculosis](#)

[Effects of platelet-rich plasma on the healing of sternal wounds: a meta-analysis](#)

Publications

Prescribing Patterns of Antihypertensive Medications in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A Systematic Review

Verda Arshad, **Zainab Samad**, Jai Das, **Aysha Almas**, Nouman Rashid, Salim S. Virani, Gerald S. Bloomfield, Tazeen H. Jafar, and **Bilal Ahmed**

In Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health 1–9 © 2020 APJPH

Air pollution and Non Communicable Diseases

Zafar Fatmi, Shafaq Mahmood, **Zainab Samad**, **Mohammad Wasay**

In J Pak Med Assoc Vol. 70, No. 11, November 2020

A rare cause of dyspeptic symptoms and anaemia in a young man
Hareem Rehman, **Shahab Abid**, Naila Kayani, Ali Haroon

In Gut. 2020 Oct 6; gutjnl-2020-322511.

doi: 10.1136/gutjnl-2020-322511.

Wellness Services: A Need Assessment Survey for Post Graduate Medical Education Trainees at Aga Khan University Hospital, Pakistan

Tania Nadeem & Nargis Asad & Muhammad Yusuf Hafiz & Nida Rahman & Muhammad Rizwan Khan & Tashfeen Ahmad & **Noreen Nasir** & Sahar Nadeem Hamid & Mohammad Zaman & Shahina Pirani

In Medical Science Educator

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40670-020-01098-6>

Effect of a multicomponent intervention on achievement and improvements in quality-of-care indices among people with Type 2 diabetes in South Asia: the CARRS trial

M. K. Shah, D. Kondal, S. A. Patel, K. Singh, R. Devarajan, R. Shivashankar, V. S. Ajay, V. U. Menon, P. K. Varthakavi, V. Viswanathan, M. Dharmalingam, G. Bantwal, R. K. Sahay, **M. Q. Masood**, R. Khadgawat, A. Desai, D. Prabhakaran, K. M. V. Narayan, N. Tandon and M. K. Ali

In Diabet Med. 2020 Nov; 37(11):1825-1831.

doi: 10.1111/dme.14124. Epub 2019 Sep 28.

Sub-Acute Intestinal Obstruction – A Rare Complication in a patient with Autosomal Dominant Polycystic Kidney Disease: A Case Report

Nazish Naseer, Sonia Yaqub.

In PJKD 2020; 4 (3):294-296

Vitamin D Usage among Pakistani Population – Too Much of a Good Thing

Bhagwan Das, and **Sarah Nadeem**

Journal of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan 2020, Vol. 30(09): 1002

Severity of Disease from COVID-19 in Patients with Obesity and MAFLD: Is there an association?

Muhammad Kamran and Wasim Jafri

Journal of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan 2020, Vol. 30(09): 891-893

Upcoming Events

Epilepsy Update

PROFILE

In addition to his current role, Dr Ali recently served as the Vice Dean and previously, as the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Associate Dean for Medical Education, Professionalism and Diversity at the University of Toledo. Dr Ali has been the recipient of numerous teaching awards as well as a recipient of the prestigious Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine award twice and has been inducted into AOA Chapter.

Dr. Ali began his medical career from the Aga Khan University, Medical College in 1989. He then completed his residency and fellowship in Clinical Neurophysiology & Epilepsy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In clinical research, he has been interested in therapeutics in epilepsy, status epilepticus & clinical medical education.



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THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

SPEAKER



Dr Imran Ali

Professor & Clair Martig Endowed Chair
Department of Neurology, University of Toledo
Inaugural Chair, Department of Neurology
Promedica Health Systems

Monday, November 9, 2020

8:15 am to 9:15 am

Virtual Grand Round

zoom link <https://zoom.us/j/990972228>



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Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME)

The ACCME designates this live educational activity for a maximum of **1.00** credit hours of AMA PRA category 1 credit™

The faculty, staff and any individual connected to this activity confirms that this activity do not have any financial relationship with proprietary entities, producing, marketing, re-selling or distributing healthcare goods or services consumed or used on patients.

Internal Medicine Symposium

quality in education and healthcare

Friday November 20, 2020

Highlights

- Keynote speeches
- Updates on providing quality patient care
- Research presentations
- Webinar: Quality in education and health care

Register Now!

For queries

www.aku.edu/InternalMedicineSymposium
conf.sec@aku.edu | +92 21 3486 4578/4584



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virtual

pulse 2021

gender matters
in cardiovascular disease

Conference highlights

- Online sessions
- Hands-on workshops
- Opportunities for networking and collaboration
- Lively debates about controversies in clinical care
- Research discussions
- Oral and Poster presentations

save the date

January 21-24, 2021

For queries

www.aku.edu/pulse

conf.sect@aku.edu | +92 21 3486 4578/4584



We welcome submissions to Inspire. Write to zahrah.khan@aku.edu or barbara.dacruz@aku.edu or salima.karani@aku.edu

Karachi 74800, Pakistan
Tel: +92 21 3493 0051
Stadium Road
P. O. Box 3500

Find us on: