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THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

inspire

Innovation, Service & Patient -
Centered Research & Education

Department of Medicine

Volume 4 | Issue 7

Message from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

These pages have been documenting departmental milestones, your successes, and stories for the last 3 years. I hope you have enjoyed reading the newsletter as much as our team has enjoyed putting it together. The newsletter goes through many rounds of edits and the team including Barbara, Zahrah, Salima (and Bisma initially) works hard to get this to you diligently every first Friday of the month.

To keep the newsletter interesting, we hope to add/replace sections and suggestions from you all are very welcome. We have recently added a new section – Faculty's favorite poem. We hope to reach out to you to invite you to share poetry that you love or find inspiring and also share why.

Happy reading with the first installment of the new section below!

All my best,

Zainab

Medicine at National and International Forums

Pakistan Global Women Leaders with Royal College of Physicians London (RCP)



On 12th June 2021, a focused group discussion regarding barriers and facilitators to women leadership in medicine was conducted by Dr Mumtaz Patel, Global Vice President at RCP London, and Dr Zainab Samad, Chair of Department of Medicine at the Aga Khan University Hospital. The aim of the discussion was to help towards informing and shaping an international leadership programme being developed by Dr Patel and Dr Samad along with their team to support and empower women in medicine. The panel included a group of young, ambitious women in early stages of their medical careers. The conversation touched upon various topics exploring the many barriers faced by women in their career path particularly in the local context. These included cultural, societal, and financial limitations, as well as a lack of focused career counselling for assisting women in discovering their true potential. These initiatives are integral in addressing and overcoming the challenges to advance women's leadership in medicine and will most definitely pave the way for a much-needed change!




Congratulations!
Dr Zainab Samad
On being appointed
Section Editor for Journal of American College of Cardiology Asia
&
Member of the Editorial Board of Journal of Asian Pacific Society of Cardiology



Dr Sarah Nadeem moderated a session on Skeletal Health at AACE (American association of clinical endocrinologists) annual meeting ENVISION. It was a 100% virtual session that was held from May 26 - 29, 2021. This was an exclusive virtual meeting platform that provided several participants the opportunity to engage with colleagues, industry partners, and promote

Organized by:
 Section of Neurology, Department of Medicine
 in collaboration with
 Department of Continuing Professional Education



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Information: Mr Zainab Arif
 Department of Medicine
 021 3486 4708

Registration: Conference Secretariat
 021 3413 0011 ext. 4378/4084
 info@acsa.aku.edu

2nd Multiple Sclerosis Workshop

Saturday, June 19, 2021 | 2:25 to 5:00 pm
 Virtual Session

Time	Topic	Speaker
2:25-2:30	Welcome note	Dr. Abdul Latif Bhatti
2:30-2:40	Global and regional burden of MS Registry	Dr. Muhammad Wasay
2:40-3:10	GP perception about multiple sclerosis	Dr. Zahid Khan
3:10-3:30	Clinical diagnostic diagnostic criteria for MS	Dr. Saqib Hussain
3:30-3:50	Radiology of MS: Diagnostic tools to MS	Dr. Saadul Karim
3:50-4:20	Therapeutic strategies in MS: demyelinating diseases	Dr. Farooq Siddiqi
4:20-4:40	Pathogenesis: the state of Art and therapy in MS management	Dr. Khadija Farooq
4:40-4:55	Managing complications of MS: disability assessment	Dr. Shabir Mahmood
4:55-5:00	Chief guest	Dr. Ghulam Farooq, DMSc, Canada

Registration Details
[Link: https://portal.aace.org](https://portal.aace.org)

* Zoom Link for session will be shared to registered participants only
 * After completion of activity a Certificate will be provided

Course Director
Muhammad Wasay MD
FRCP (Edin), FAAN
 Professor, Neurology
 Department of Medicine

Post workshop of Neurology Certificate Course

The 2nd Multiple Sclerosis hybrid workshop was organized in Gwadar and virtually by the Neurology section – Department of Medicine. Professor Dr Wasay served as the Course Director and several faculty members from the

networking around the globe. The chief aim is to continue to elevate endocrinology and develop global health.



section contributed during the session in person and virtually. The session was well attended.

Congratulations!
Dr Ayeesha Kamal
*On being appointed a member of
Editorial Board - Journal of
Cerebrovascular Disease
&
Cochrane Editorial Group for Stroke*



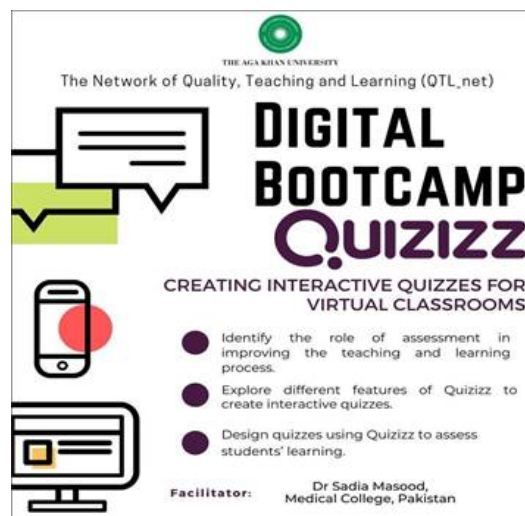
Prof Javaid A. Khan conducted a live session on Facebook, themed, "Quit smoking! Before it's too late". Prof Khan imparted the most effective ways to quit smoking to the participants along with techniques as to how to stay committed which is one of the most difficult point for several chain smokers.



Congratulations!
Dr Adeel ur Rehman
*On being certified as
International member of
Japan Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
society*



Dr. Sadia Masood was invited as guest speaker at the International Conference on Health Professional



Dr Sadia Masood in collaboration with Network of quality teaching and learning organized the

Education in Shiraz, Iran. The main theme of conference was evaluation and innovation in medical education. Dr. Masood discussed the Virtual patient and how it would assist in improving the clinical reasoning skills of students.



3rd successful boot camp. It was about creating interactive QUIZZIZ for virtual class room. The objectives were to identify the role of assessment in improving teaching and learning processes and creating interactive quizzes. It was well attended and appreciated by faculty.

Healthcare Heroes!

- Dr Aisha Jabeen
- Dr Rida Zehra
- Dr Bakhtawar Masood

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

Healthcare Heroes!

- Dr Muhammad Tariq
- Dr Iffat Khanum
- Dr Syed Ahsan

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

In-depth- featuring Visiting Faculty Dr Salim Virani

By Maha Inam



Researcher, clinician, academic scholar, community worker, global health advocate, leader, mentor; these

constitute the distinguished professional roles adopted by Dr. Salim S. Virani, MD, Ph.D., during the course of his career. Dr. Virani's journey has been one of exceptional accomplishments and success, highlighted by him being a recipient of many prestigious and esteemed awards from numerous institutions throughout his career. Dr. Virani believes himself to be extremely fortunate to be in a position where he has the ability to interact with and make a positive and lasting impact on individuals, communities and organizations.

Dr. Virani is an alumnus of the Aga Khan University Class of 1998, graduating with the Best Medical Graduate Award. He completed his residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Miami in 2005, receiving an award as the Best Resident. He then went on to pursue a Cardiology fellowship at the Texas Heart Institute, where he served as the Chief Cardiology Fellow and received the Tauber Award for the Outstanding Graduating Fellow in 2008. Dr. Virani also obtained his Ph.D. in the Clinical Investigation, Clinical Scientist Training Program (CSTP) from the Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX in 2012. His

Making use of new advancements regarding natural language processing and machine learning allows computers to read text notes and present contextual information in a structured setting. Dr. Virani's work is aimed at the application of new advancements to patient care. "It takes 17 years for new knowledge to make it into clinical practice," he says, highlighting the need to efficiently implement findings into practice for patient facing benefit. The study of structured data assists in streamlining the process of leveraging technology and making interventions more specific for both clinicians and patients. The findings from these research projects play a pivotal role in examining innovative models of health care delivery at the level of health care system and identifying ways to improve delivery of guideline concordant cardiovascular care at the point-of-care. Dr. Virani's experience and exposure in health services research gives him the distinct ability to incorporate both epi-imaging and health systems perspectives within his studies. More recently, his team is also examining how to best leverage innovative digital health solutions to improve quality of cardiovascular disease care in Low-Middle Income Countries (LMIC's).

The spirit of giving back lies at the heart of Dr. Virani's current goals. He firmly believes in the notion of Civil Society, that one of the most important objectives of being able to acquire quality education is to serve the communities in which we live and the communities in need. He views it not only as a privilege, but as a personal

expertise in epidemiology, health statistics and health services research is an integral contributor towards his research interests, allowing him to view and understand system driven research from various perspectives.

“As an individual, you can only do so much. But when you do that work with an organization, the impact (of your work) grows exponentially...”

Dr. Virani joined Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas in 2008, where he is currently serving as a tenured Professor in the Sections of Cardiology and Cardiovascular Research, and as the Director for the Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship Training Program. He is also serving as an investigator in the Health Policy, Quality, and Informatics Program at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Health Services Research and Development Center of Innovation in Houston, TX, and as Co-Director for the VA Advanced Fellowship Program in Health Services Research & Development at MEDVAMC. Dr. Virani is also currently a visiting faculty for the Department of Medicine at the Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi. Dr. Virani serves as the Chair for the ACC’s Global NCD Academy and the ACC International’s Global Quality Solutions Work group and is also on the Board of Directors for the American Society of Preventive Cardiology. He is an Associate Editor for Innovations for ACC.org and the Chair for Digital Strategy for the cardiovascular disease prevention related content for ACC.org. These leadership roles have allowed him to contribute to national and international educational efforts and have enabled him to understand how learners interact with online educational resources and how best to leverage online education. Touching upon the significance of medical professionals increasingly taking up leadership roles within organizations, Dr. Virani states, “As an individual, you can only do so much. But when you do that work with an organization, the impact (of your work) grows exponentially”. He highlights the importance of being able to contextualize learnings from various systems and apply them to presenting situations as needed, given the fact that findings are transferable; “It makes you a complete clinician who can understand things from various perspectives”.

Dr. Virani specializes in the clinical practice of Preventative Cardiology with an expertise in the management of complex dyslipidemias. His research is aimed towards studying the pathophysiology and epidemiology of atherosclerosis, with a special emphasis on South Asians. He has a keen interest in the theme of innovation in health care using “Big Data”. This is aimed at utilizing structured and unstructured data and novel informatic techniques to understand system-level gaps in guideline-directed delivery of cardiovascular disease care and to identify implementation strategies to improve adherence of

responsibility. In that respect, he spends around 15-20 hours in voluntary service every week with a dedicated team of volunteers to provide educational and behavioral intervention related resources to combat NCDs in the community, and plays an active role in health care capacity building for communities in South Asia, Central Asia, and East Africa. “On a personal level, I would like to do more and more work in Pakistan and pivot as much as possible towards giving back,” he says. Dr. Virani mentions that returning to Pakistan is a move which is always in the cards; “If the time is right, I am open to moving back”. His commitments at Baylor College of Medicine and various international organizations provide an incentive to remain within the US, and he looks forward to a valued proposition with a significant impact to prompt the decision of coming back to Pakistan. However, he ensures that distance does not present as a significant barrier in his work and productivity by visiting Pakistan on an annual basis and regularly staying in touch with his collaborators through virtual meetings and calls.

“There is a responsibility that comes with education...”

Between all the places his life and career have taken him, Dr. Virani remains most grateful for and indebted to the support system he found at AKU. “Solely the opportunity of being able to come to AKU and interact with so many students, it is the best thing that has ever happened to me,” he says. Dr. Virani urges all students and graduates to constantly ask themselves what they are doing to add value to their communities, be it in the form of time, knowledge, or expertise. He emphasizes on the need to stay humble and well-grounded, and aim to contribute to knowledge within one’s society, community, and country. “There is a responsibility that comes with education,” he notes, “and as AKU graduates, I certainly believe we have a greater role to play as leaders in knowledge society”.

Speaking about his personal challenges, Dr. Virani points out the most prevalent struggle faced by almost all professionals — maintaining a work life balance. He notes how the boundaries between his career responsibilities and personal commitments can often become blurred, with multitasking being a key skill to master in order to successfully manage the two. He redefines multitasking as “doing multiple tasks in a day, but not multiple tasks at once” to minimize distractions and avoid the time lag which is precipitated by task shifting.

Returning to his alma mater as a visiting faculty and working with colleagues at AKU has been a major focus for Dr. Virani over the last five years, which he has spent involving himself within

national cardiovascular guidelines. Dr. Virani has authored and co-authored over 500 peer-reviewed publications related to various preventive therapies including cholesterol, blood pressure control and aspirin therapy, published in several high-impact journals such as Circulation, European Heart Journal, JAMA Internal Medicine, JAMA Cardiology, and Journal of the American College of Cardiology. Cardiovascular disease prevention is a focal point of Dr. Virani's research interests. He explores the applicability of recommended interventions from a system-based perspective to best implement them for clinicians, as well as maximize their utility and impact on guidelines. He notes the recently evolving nature of research towards more personalized medicine, aimed at developing machine learning for Electronic Medical Records to successfully provide patient-specific prompts for clinicians.

research projects and initiatives taking place within the hospital through a continued collaboration with Dr. Zainab Samad. He hopes to remain active on the academic side of things and shift his focus towards pursuing the study of NCD's in LMIC's. "I am most excited at the opportunity of being able to learn from the US healthcare system and bring it back to Pakistan," says Dr. Virani, aspiring to dedicate his time for the benefit of his country. He is eager to have the opportunity to interact with students at AKU as well, ensuring he makes time to share his experiences and provide mentorship and career counselling advice as a priority for all those who reach out to him. We are incredibly grateful and excited to have Dr. Virani join our team to help make revolutionary and lasting changes in the medical care landscape of Pakistan!



Congratulations!
Dr Ainan Arshad
On winning
Best Case Report Contest 2021-
MIRCIM





Featured Faculty: Dr. Saadia Tabassum

“...the road to success is bumpy and tortuous. There is no elevator to success, you have to take the stairs!”

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

Well, no matter how cliché this may sound since an early age i.e before 10 I liked playing as a doctor and applying bandages etc. I also admit the fascination got stronger by watching western TV serials about doctors that left me in awe as at that time there was no local except one.

What are your hobbies/interests?

Currently, with a busy routine now web/social media is all that I get time for! I had always loved exploring new places and still do. I had been a movie buff and Tech savvy in past.

What made you choose AKU?

AKU provides opportunities to excel professionally. It motivates you to strive for giving quality of care to patients which is also my priority. Overall, AKU brings out the best in you!

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

I can think of two; one is a social worker and second one could have been an artist as I liked sketching in school days.

What advice would you like to give to your juniors?

I would advise them that the road to success is bumpy and tortuous. There is no elevator to success - you have to take the stairs! Always remember that honesty, hard work and humility are the keys to long-lasting success.

What lessons have you learned from your seniors?

Perseverance, dedication and commitment

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

I am grateful to Allah (swt) to have many not one. I would like to mention one, which encompasses both professional and personal feats, giving the greatest feeling of accomplishment that is when a patient who had been in misery for long is managed well and prays earnestly for you.

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

Maintaining work and personal life balance is one big challenge in a competitive world. Apart from that, every day I learn something to improve myself professionally and personally. The word failure should not exist as we all are learning from mistakes and experiences.

Any interesting/memorable encounter

There are several, depending on time frame we are talking about. I recall from my school and college days, I had met several dignitaries and international celebrities by virtue of my father. Recent memorable encounters i. e Pre-Covid, was having a chat with Professor Griffiths and Professor Reich who are considered as one of the fathers of Dermatology. This was in 2015 and 2019 on the sidelines of World congress of Dermatology where I was presenting my abstract.

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

Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah; his honesty and dedication have been motivational for me. Professionally speaking, Prof Tasneem Ahsan who was my supervisor in Internal Medicine is a true example of an empowered woman as well as being a thorough professional.

What are your thoughts about the current pandemic COVID-19?

The extra-ordinary circumstances have taught me, I guess like everyone else, a lot of lessons. The uncertainty made me think, yet again, about the frailty of humans and how divine intervention can reclaim the planet. How to overcome challenging circumstances we all are still learning.

What are your future goals?

Given the opportunity of being a dermatology faculty member at CPSP I have started work on uplifting and standardization of Dermatology training across programs and exit exam at a national level.

What are Academics Around the World Reading This Month?

[Trauma informed interventions: A systematic review](#)

[SARS-COV-2 Infection and Specific Antibody Detection on Health Care Workers from a Military Hospital in Madrid, Spain](#)

[Associations between changes in daily behaviors and self-reported feelings of depression and anxiety about the COVID-19 pandemic among older adults](#)

[Identification and Validation of Plasma Metabolomic Signatures in Precancerous Gastric Lesions That Progress to Cancer](#)

[Steroid resistance and rebound phenomena in patients with COVID-19](#)

Publications

The discrepancy between admission and discharge diagnoses: Underlying factors and potential clinical outcomes in a low socioeconomic country

Samar Fatima, Sara Shamim, Amna Subhan Butt, Safia Awan, Simra Riffat, Muhammad Tariq

In *PLoS ONE* 16(6): e0253316. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0253316>

Triggering and protective factors of burnout in medical resident physicians in a lower-middle-income country: A cross-sectional study

Saad bin Zafar Mahmood, Aqusa Zahida, Noreen Nasir, MunaimTahir, Uzma Ghouri, Aysha Almas

In *Annals of Medicine and Surgery* 67 (July, 2021) 102500

Applying a Mixed-Method Approach to Improve On-the-Job Learning and Job Satisfaction in a Cohort of Interns at a University Hospital

Amna S. Butt, Muhammad S. Shamim, M Asghar Ali, Farah Qamar, Irum Q. Khan, Swaleha Tariq, Syeda Amrah Hashmi, Quratulain Hafeez, Muhammed Tariq

In *Cureus* 13(6): e15905. doi:10.7759/cureus.15905

Malignant and Non-Malignant Causes of Hypercalcemia: A Retrospective Study at a Tertiary Care Hospital in Pakistan.

Sabiha Banu, Sumera Batool, Saadia Sattar, Muhammad Q. Masood

In *Cureus* 13(6): e15845. doi:10.7759/cureus.15845

Comparison of clinical characteristics and outcomes between COVID-19 pneumonia and H1N1 influenza

Nosheen Nasir, Iffat Khanum, Kiren Habib, Rimsha Ahmed, Mujahid Hussain, Zahra Hasan, Muhammad Irfan

In *Adv Respir Med* 2021;89(3):254-261

Impact of acne on quality of life in young Pakistani adults and its relationship with severity: A multicenter study

Shaheen Naveed, Sadia Masood, Atiya Rahman, Safia Awan, Saadia Tabassum

In *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences*, 37(3)

Faculty's –Favorite poem

Nazim Hikmet was a compatriot of Faiz. He wrote this in prison. I love this poem because it really makes you grateful for the gift of life and reminds you to be sentient about living. More poignant in these pandemic times of loss....

Dr Ayeesha Kamal

On Living

[Nazim Hikmet](#) - 1902-1963

Living is no laughing matter:

you must live with great seriousness

like a squirrel, for example—

I mean without looking for something beyond and above living,

I mean living must be your whole occupation.

Living is no laughing matter:

you must take it seriously,

Let's say we're at the front—

for something worth fighting for, say.

There, in the first offensive, on that very day, we might fall on our face, dead.

We'll know this with a curious anger,

but we'll still worry ourselves to death

about the outcome of the war, which could last years.

Let's say we're in prison

and close to fifty,

so much so and to such a degree
that, for example, your hands tied behind your back,
your back to the wall,
or else in a laboratory,
in your white coat and safety glasses,
you can die for people—
even for people whose faces you've never seen,
even though you know living
is the most real, the most beautiful thing.
I mean, you must take living so seriously
that even at seventy, for example, you'll plant olive
trees—
and not for your children, either,
but because although you fear death you don't believe
it,
because living, I mean, weighs heavier.

II
Let's say we're seriously ill, need surgery—
which is to say we might not get up,
from the white table.
Even though it's impossible not to feel sad
about going a little too soon,
we'll still laugh at the jokes being told,
we'll look out the window to see if it's raining,
or still wait anxiously
for the latest newscast. . .

and we have eighteen more years, say,
before the iron doors will open.
We'll still live with the outside,
with its people and animals, struggle and wind—
I mean with the outside beyond the walls.
I mean, however and wherever we are, we must
live as if we will never die.

III
This earth will grow cold,
a star among stars
and one of the smallest,
a gilded mote on blue velvet—
I mean *this*, our great earth.
This earth will grow cold one day,
not like a block of ice
or a dead cloud even
but like an empty walnut it will roll along
in pitch-black space . . .
You must grieve for this right now
—you have to feel this sorrow now—
for the world must be loved this much
if you're going to say "I lived". . .

Upcoming Event

Department of Medicine
Virtual Grand Rounds

Health System Strengthening for Cardiovascular Diseases: Lessons from a Partnership in Kenya

GUEST LECTURE

Please send your questions before or during the session at sanam.bano@aku.edu

PROFILE

Dr Bloomfield is the alumnus of Johns Hopkins Hospital, Duke University Medical Center and the Duke Clinical Research Institute. He is leading an NIH-funded research program in clinical care pathways for people living with HIV. His work is particularly focused on heart failure and HIV-associated cardiovascular diseases, where he studies the application of ultrasound imaging to detect and predict myocardial dysfunction in HIV-infected individuals. Dr Bloomfield has lived and worked in Kenya for over a decade where he has led studies of heart failure epidemiology, cardiovascular effects of indoor air pollution, genetic associations with cardiac arrhythmias and cardiovascular disease risk factors among HIV-infected individuals. His ongoing research and capacity building efforts are based domestically as well as at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute's Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Disease Center of Excellence at Moi University in Eldoret, Kenya where he is a Visiting Lecturer

SPEAKER



Gerald S. Bloomfield, MD, MPH

Associate Professor of Medicine
Associate Research Professor of Global Health
Member in the Duke Clinical Research Institute
Division of Cardiology, Department of Medicine
Duke University

Monday, July 5, 2021
8:15 am to 9:15 am

Virtual Grand Round

<https://video.ibm.com/channel/WBimZUcG3UN>



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

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