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Fall 8-1-2022

## INSPIRE : Vol 5, Issue 8

Department of Medicine  
*Aga Khan University*

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THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

*inspire*

Innovation, Service & Patient -  
Centered Research & Education

*Department of Medicine*

*Volume 5 | Issue 8*

## ***Message from the Chair***

Dear Colleagues

First it was the heat and then came the floods. The last few months have seen many countries reeling from the effects of climate change. From record breaking high temperatures and fires, to glacial outbursts and unusual rain fall with flooding, no one has been spared. While Pakistan does not substantially contribute to global CO2 emissions it is considered amongst the countries at highest risk from climate change.

Several factors contribute to our high climate risk index rating including our geographic location, agricultural economy, food insecurity and perpetual water scarcity. Matthews and colleagues modelled heat stress using the Karachi 2015 heat wave as an analog. They used a large ensemble of climate models and found that the global mean temperature is nonlinearly related to heat stress suggesting that future global warming could result in larger societal impacts than previously experienced. The non-linearity particularly is higher for heat stress measures that incorporate rising humidity. Even if the climate target held to 2C above preindustrial, Karachi could be expected to have heat waves every year. At 1.5 C warming, Karachi would be expected to have deadly heat every 3.6 years.

Poor urban planning and infrastructure is likely to compound our problems in the future if immediate action is not taken. It is heartening to see the actions the leadership at AKU has already undertaken through net zero carbon commitments, environment conscious designing and interventions that span from awareness creation to policy change. In the coming few years climate change will have increasing direct impact on human health and its imperative that our institution continues to play a vital role in not only shaping its own policies and adaptation but helping the national thinking and action on this front.

There is a lot that all of us can do in our individual capacities to mitigate climate risk. These every day efforts range from ditching plastic bottles, plastic bags to carpooling to conserve and reduce gas use. I know many of our faculty members routinely contribute to tree plantation campaigns. Together our efforts can lead to a better environment for us and for our future generations.

Zainab

## *Medicine at National and International Forums*

### *AKU- AKHSP Research Bootcamp*



To foster research ties and build mutual research capacity, the CITRIC Health Data Science Center hosted a team from AKHSP at a 'Fundamentals of health care research' training workshop on June 24-25, 2022. The Course was directed by Dr Zainab Samad and Dr Zahra Hoodbhoy and was the combined effort of several faculty from the Departments of Medicine, Pediatrics, CHS, and BBS. Faculty included Dr. Jai Das, Dr. Aysha Almas, Dr Imran Nisar, Dr Farah Khalid, Dr Satwat Hashmi, and Dr Sadia Sattar. The course covered several topics ranging from Literature review to data analysis and ethical aspects of research. The interactive nature of the course and hands on sessions were particularly appreciated by the participants.

*Congratulations!*

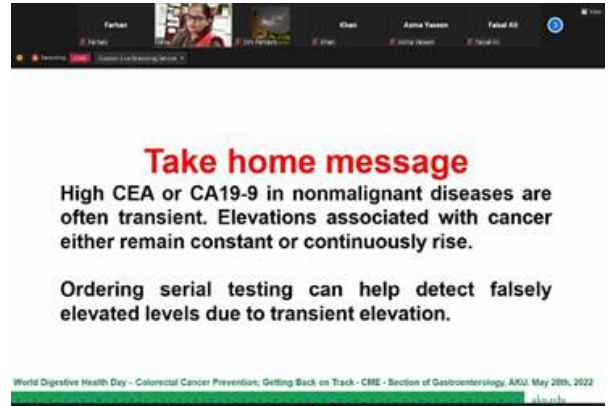
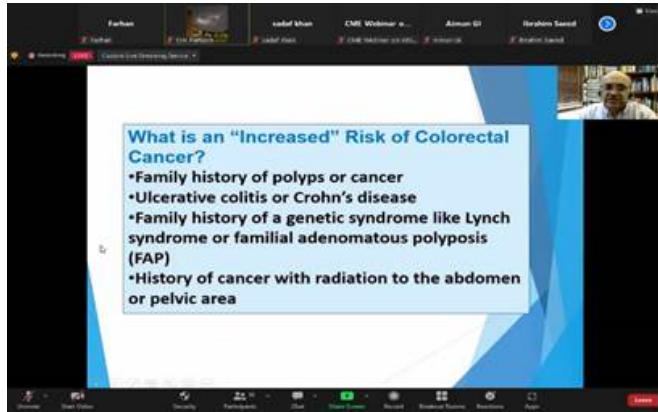
*Dr. Muhammad Tariq*

On appointment as

*Vice Dean*

*Medical College AKUH*





### Multidisciplinary Webinar of colorectal cancer

Section of Gastroenterology conducted a multidisciplinary Webinar of colorectal cancer on the day of World digestive health day. World gastroenterology organization observes 29th May as World Digestive Health day. This Year's theme was 'Colorectal cancer prevention'. This is pertinent to our country as this cancer is relatively common and amongst top 10 cancers and often affects younger age groups.

### 19th Annual conference of Medical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases Society of Pakistan (MMIDSP)





The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual conference of Medical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases Society of Pakistan (MMIDSP) under the able leadership of Dr. Bushra Jamil was held in May 2022 in twin cities Rawalpindi-Islamabad. Faculty from DOM including Dr. Faisal Mahmood, Dr. Nosheen Nasir and Dr. Muhammad Irfan were invited as esteemed speakers at the conference. Moreover, Dr. Ramla Ghafoor, Fellow in ID section presented her study in the oral paper session. Dr. Nosheen Nasir was the recipient of the best poster award and Dr. Sara Ahmed was one of the top 5 ID quiz winners. Congrats to All!



***Congratulations!***

***Dr. Saeed Sadiq Hamid***

*And his team on presenting several Abstracts  
at the  
International Liver Congress (ILC)  
2022  
organized by the  
European Association for the Study  
of the Liver (EASL)*







## ***Dermatopathology Mock Workshop***

The Section of Dermatology in collaboration with the Section of Histopathology organized an interesting and dynamic Hybrid workshop and Mock examination for dermatology residents and faculty. It was an interactive session and engaged the participants throughout the workshop. The course directors, Dr. Sadia Masood and Dr Saira Fatima, assisted and guided the participants by sharing their personal experiences and involving everyone in the discussion. It was well attended by residents and faculty across the country, and they appreciated the quality and organization of this workshop. Participants highlighted that their thinking was inspired, they had time to discuss and explore new ideas, and were allowed to practice the new techniques.



## ***Student Activity - World Digestive Health Day***

AKU Medical students celebrated the world digestive health day to create awareness about this preventable, treatable and beatable disease. Pictures above highlight the fun and enjoyment during the activity.



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

The President's Review

June 2022 | Inaugural Edition

## *Nephrology- Online certificate course*

Dr Sonia Yaqub, launched an Online certificate course in collaboration with AKUH, to train Physicians in treatment of early kidney disease in order to cover the lack of Nephrologists in Pakistan. This Online Nephrology certificate course has lately been acknowledged in **The President's Review**. The course, which is now available via VLE, received appreciation under the 'Capacity Building initiatives of AKU' in the inaugural edition of the review. The course has been recognized and endorsed by the Pakistan's Society of Nephrology, adding to the educational value and impact of the course. Congratulations to the course Director, Dr Sonia Yaqub and the entire team! Click [here](#) for more details.



*Namra Aziz*

Instructor (Research section)

*Welcome!*

to the Department of Medicine!

Namra Aziz has completed her Undergraduate degree in Economics and Mathematics from IBA in 2018. She is currently enrolled in Master of Data Science Program at IBA. Namra is a Fogarty Fellow in the AKUPI NCD Research training Program.



World hepatitis day is an important day to commemorate in Pakistan. Globally every liver and GI society marks this day to create awareness about these Silent killers. Dr Faisal Ismail presented on Hepatitis B in the year 2022 and future therapies to mark this event.

*Salima Aamdani*

Instructor – Research section

*Welcome*

to the Department of Medicine!





Ms Salima completed her BScN from the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Aga Khan University in 2014 and later did MSc in Health Policy & Management from the Aga Khan University, Community Health Sciences in 2018. Ms Salima is passionate to bring a positive change in healthcare via research, evidence-based practices and quality care. She too is a newly inducted Fogarty Fellow in the AKUPI NCD Research training program.



## Awareness Session - World Hepatitis Day

World hepatitis day awareness session was conducted by the section of Gastroenterology at Abbott Laboratory Pakistan on July 21st 2022. This awareness session highlighted the need to accelerate the fight against viral hepatitis and the importance of diagnosis and treatment for the patients in need.



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The Aga Khan University Hospital



### HEPATITIS can't wait

Our multidisciplinary team will answer your questions about who should get screened for Hepatitis, the treatment options available and any other questions you may have on Hepatitis and other liver diseases.

**Thursday, 28 July 2022**  
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM  
Official AKUH Facebook Page

**Moderator:**



**Dr. Amna Subhan**  
Consultant,  
Gastroenterologist

**Panelists:**



**Dr. Saeed Hamid**  
Consultant,  
Gastroenterologist



**Dr. Rizwan Khan**  
Consultant,  
General Surgeon



**Dr. Wasim Memon**  
Consultant,  
Radiologist



**Ms. Laila Khymani**  
Director,  
Outreach Medical Services




www.facebook.com/AKUHPakistan

A Facebook live session was held on the topic "Hepatitis can't wait". Dr Amna Subhan Butt was the moderator and Dr Saeed Hamid among the others was the esteemed panelists. Expert advise was shared along with addressing queries of several participants. It was a much informative session.



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The Aga Khan University Hospital

## YouTube LIVE

### Health in Focus

#### Stomach Infections and Other Seasonal Infections

Tune in to hear from our Gastroenterology and Infectious Disease experts on how to stay safe and healthy during this rainy Eid season.



**Dr Om Parkash**  
Consultant,  
Gastroenterologist



**Dr Iffat Khanum**  
Consultant,  
Adult Infectious Diseases

**Thursday**  
7 July 2022

**3:00 PM – 4:00 PM**

**AKUH**  
YouTube Page

Subscribe NOW to our YouTube Channel and press the icon to receive updates



For an appointment: 021-111-911-911  
https://hospital.aku.edu/Pakistan  
AKUH/Pakistan | AgaKhanUniversity/Hospital/Pakistan

Section of Gastroenterology and Infectious Diseases at AKU conducted a live session on Youtube. It was based on stomach infections and other seasonal infections. This session was well received and provided much needed information on the trending topic.





## Healthcare Heroes!

- Dr. Ayesha Memon
- Dr. Haris Afzal
- Dr. Sarah Arshad

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

## In-depth- featuring Associate Prof. & Section Head (Gastroenterology) Dr Om Parkash

By Shahnoor Ahmed and Maha Inam



Interventional gastroenterology is a subspecialty of gastroenterology that focuses on advanced endoscopic techniques for the treatment of gastrointestinal, pancreatic, and hepatobiliary disease. The field emerged only a few decades ago, but with the rapid advancement of technology and research, it has grown to be at the cutting-edge of medicine, revolutionizing the way numerous gastrointestinal diseases have been diagnosed and managed. These range from advanced imaging techniques to identify cancerous conditions, to the treatment of numerous gastrointestinal malignancies and obstructions – many of these which could have only been treated surgically just a few decades ago. Dr Om Parkash has made this field his own, initiating the fellowship for advanced ERCP intervention in AKUH, the first of its kind in Pakistan, along with being a key figure in expanding the scope of GI interventions in Pakistan.

Dr Om Parkash completed his undergraduate medical education from Chandka Medical College, Larkana, emerging as the gold medalist of the Class of 2000. Following his graduation, he joined AKUH for his internship, after which he remained a lifelong member of the AKU community. He completed both his Internal Medicine residency and Gastroenterology fellowship from AKUH, where he graduated as the Best PGME Graduate along with receiving numerous Best Resident Awards during his training. Currently, he serves as an Associate Professor in the Section of Gastroenterology, Department of Medicine, and the current Section Head of Gastroenterology. In addition to his numerous clinical and administrative positions, Dr. Parkash is extremely

However, with the passage of time, he soon became cognizant of the low feasibility that these fields have in a rural setting. As he progressed in his training, he soon realized that gastroenterology is the field for him – a mentally stimulating specialty that not only involves medical management of complex conditions but also interventional procedures. Dr Parkash stresses upon striking the right balance between being ambitious and realism, as he exclaims “you should always hope for the best and be prepared for the worst”, highlighting the importance of hard work and perseverance, while at the same time being cognizant of the countless of external factors that play a role in your life’s decisions.

Dr. Parkash’s passion for gastroenterology is reflected in his research, which revolves around advanced endoscopic interventions and hepatology, including liver cirrhosis and hepatitis delta. He has received three multi-national grants for hepatitis delta research; his work in this field contributed towards the approval of drugs which are now used to manage the disease. Furthermore, he has received an international grant to conduct a Phase II trial on patients with ulcerative colitis, along with numerous studies on liver cirrhotic patients.

His work in gastroenterology research and interventions is underpinned by his constant love for learning. He relishes the fact that medicine in general is an ever-evolving field, and no matter how experienced one can become as a clinician, it’s imperative to constantly be learning and staying up to date in your field. Being an interventional gastroenterologist, he has seen the field evolve before his eyes in Pakistan as the country has caught up with the technology and advancements of the rest

passionate about medical education, working as a UGME Coordinator for Years 3 and 5 of the Medical College.

*“...always hope for the best and be prepared for the worst...”*

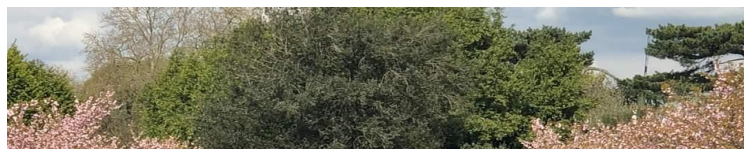
With his professional interests encompassing such a wide variety of different fields, Dr Parkash takes immense pleasure and joy in multitasking and managing all of them on a day-to-day basis. Reflecting on his journey at AKUH, he strived for excellence at every step of the way, while at the same time acknowledging the culture and environment of this institution that enabled him to reach the heights he wished to achieve as a clinician, researcher, and educator.

Dr. Parkash's path towards gastroenterology was a very interesting one, being shaped by not only his interest in the subject, but also by his background. Dr. Parkash hails from Gotkhi, a village located in northern Sindh. In a rural setting with limited resources, he emerged as an exceedingly bright student, being the first one from his family to attend university and become a doctor. Throughout his medical training, he often thought about potentially practicing in his hometown and local community – as such, he wanted to pursue a field which would be feasible to setup back in Gotkhi, where cutting-edge equipment may not be readily available. As such, during the earliest days of his training, his mind was not set on pursuing gastroenterology; rather, he wanted to pursue either neurosurgery or cardiothoracic surgery!

of the world. He acknowledges that this field is still in its relative infancy in the country, but at the same time, he's excited at the potential it still holds, as he undoubtedly is one of the key figures in innovating and developing this field in the country.

*“...don't be afraid to seek help...”*

Dr Parkash's story is what dreams are made of – a person from humble beginnings, overcoming countless obstacles and hurdles, surging to the top of his field. He recalled the time when he used to complete his homework sitting under the streetlight at night during his primary school years when his area lost its electricity supply. He takes pride in being able to have a successful career despite all the struggles he had to face growing up and during his training. Dr Parkash's journey is a testament to the fact that no matter how tough the times are, there's nothing stopping you from achieving your dreams. His advice to medical students is simple yet impactful, 'Focus on your aims and what you want to achieve in life. Above all else, don't be afraid to seek help – you can find mentors in your alumni, residents, seniors, and even your peers. There will always be someone there ready to help you out at a moment's notice'.







## *Featured Faculty – Dr Lubna Kamani – Lecturer – Gastroenterology section “... An equal world is an enabled world...”*

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

Initially, it was my father’s wish that inspired me to become a doctor. Over time, I developed an interest and passion in this field, as it is highly respectable. After that, there was no looking back.

### **What are your hobbies/interests?**

One of my favorite hobbies is travelling, be it travelling solo or with my family. It gives me immense joy to explore not only the natural beauty and various cuisines of different countries, but also to learn about the rich history and diverse cultural backgrounds each of them possesses. Travelling not only boosts your confidence but it also gives you experience as a foundation to build memories that you can cherish later on, in your life.

### **What made you choose AKU?**

I had always regretted not applying in the AKUH MBBS program, hence I did not have any second thoughts when it came to applying for an internship here. Subsequently, my AKUH journey then progressed to a medicine residency followed by a GI fellowship and then faculty. AKUH is an institution that not only provides best academics and research opportunities but also gives passionate patient care of high standards. There is no doubt that this is an institution that brings out the very best in everyone.

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

I would have become a commercial pilot in order to fulfill my dream of travelling the world.

### **What advice would you like to give to your juniors?**

There are no shortcuts to experience and success. If you aim for the skies and persevere to achieve your dreams then nothing is impossible.

### **What lessons have you learned from your seniors?**

Their advice, experience and knowledge in patient management has taught me a lot throughout the years.

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

My personal accomplishment is getting married to my husband, Dr. Arshad, as he has tirelessly supported me, enabling me to become the woman I am today. A professional accomplishment of mine is being the first female

alumnus for Gastroenterology at AKUH.

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

By the grace of God I have not faced any major challenges or failures in my life as of yet.

**Any interesting/memorable encounter**

I was recognized by a patient at a family club and he reminded me that I had saved his life 15 years prior. This had happened during my rotation in early 2000 while I was rotating in the emergency ward as a senior medicine resident. He had suddenly collapsed while giving me his history and I had to perform CPR on him before promptly shifting him to the cath lab.

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

I get inspiration from myself and that helps me to grow and improve further.

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

The pandemic is not over yet! As a result of restrictions placed on physical gatherings during the active phase of Covid-19, I learnt how important it is to be surrounded by loved ones and to find happiness in the little things we often take for granted. Covid-19 also gave us an opportunity for digital learning and teaching which further enhanced my international collaborations.

**What are your future goals?**

I would like to work towards achieving gender parity. According to the global gender gap index of 2021, Pakistan is ranked among the bottom four of 156 countries. I strongly believe "An equal world is an enabled world", and I want to do my best to make that a reality.

## *Poem Section*

**"Hope" is the thing with Feathers  
by Emily Dickinson**

"Hope" is the thing with feathers -  
That perches in the soul -  
And sings the tune without the words -  
And never stops – at all -

I've heard it in the chilliest land -  
And on the Strangest Sea -  
Yet – never – in Extremity,  
It asked a crumb – of me.

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -  
And sore must be the storm -  
That could abash the little Bird  
That kept so many warm -

## *What are Academics Around the World Reading This Month?*

[The 2022 outbreak and the pathobiology of the monkeypox virus](#)

[Suspected Cat-to-Human Transmission of SARS-CoV-2, Thailand, July-September 2021](#)

[The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Pharmacovigilance: A Systematic Review of the Literature](#)

[Calcium Scoring at Coronary CT Angiography Using Deep Learning](#)

[Artificial Intelligence in Fracture Detection: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis](#)



## ***Publications***

**A simple discharge criteria for transfer of patients from intermediate care to general care: a prospective observational study**

**Syed Ahsan Ali, Misbah Fazlani, Tazein Amber, Safia Awan**

In J Pak Med Assoc. Vol. 72, No. 7, July 2022

**Disease activity correlates and functionality in patients with rheumatoid arthritis - real-world experience from a South Asian country.**

**Noreen Nasir, Hafsa Majid, Ayesha Habib Khan, Safia Awan, Mehmood Riaz**

In Reumatologia. 2022;60(3):183-191.

**The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on patients with chronic liver disease: Results from the Global Liver Registry.**

Younossi ZM, Yilmaz Y, El-Kassas M, Duseja A, **Hamid S**, Esmat G, Méndez-Sánchez N, Chan WK, Singal AK, Lam B, Felix S, Younossi E, Verma M, Price JK, Nader F, Younossi I, Racila A, Stepanova M.

In **HepatoI Commun.** 2022 Jul 26.

**A retrospective analysis of endocrine disease in sphingosine-1-phosphate lyase insufficiency: case series and literature review**

Avinaash Maharaj, Ruth Kwong, Jack Williams, Christopher Smith, Helen Storr<sup>1</sup>, Ruth Krone, Debora Braslavsky, Maria Clemente, **Nanik Ram**, Indraneel Banerjee, Semra Çetinkaya, Federica Buonocore, Tülay Güran, John C Achermann, Louise Metherell and Rathi Prasad

In **Endocrine Connections** (2022) 11, e220250

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***We welcome submissions to Inspire. Write to [barbara.dacruz@aku.edu](mailto:barbara.dacruz@aku.edu)***

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