

OBITUARY

PROF. DR. HAROON RASHID CHAUDHRY (1955 – 2010)

M.B.B.S. (Pb.), MRCPsych (London), FRCPsych (UK). FRCP (Ireland). Diploma in Psychiatric Practice (DPP) UK, Diplomat Austrian Board in Psychiatry & Neurology (FACHARZT), Fellow of American College of Physicians (FACP), Fellow of American Psychiatric Association (FAPA).

Haroon's untimely death has left all of us in a great shock. His contributions to the uplift of Psychiatry in Pakistan will always be remembered by his peers and senior and junior colleagues. It is hard to write an obituary for Haroon as it is impossible to summarise his record of achievements and successes in few sentences.

He was born in 1955 and had his early schoolings in Lahore and got his degree in medicine from King Edward Medical College Lahore, Pakistan in 1980. Following his father's professional career and with his own interest in the speciality of Psychiatry, he attained his postgraduate training in Psychiatry in Pakistan as well as in Austria. He returned to Pakistan after obtaining his higher degree (*Diplomat Austrian Board of Psychiatry & Neurology-FACHARZT*) in 1985 and started his career as a specialist in mental health in the city of Lahore. He later on was awarded with Diploma in Psychiatric Practice London, Fellowship of American College of Psychiatrists, Membership and then Fellowship of Royal College of Psychiatrists, UK and Fellowship of Royal College of Physicians, Ireland. He served as faculty member at different Medical Colleges in Pakistan in different academic capacities and became Professor of Psychiatry at Fatima Jinnah Medical College, University of Punjab in 2001.

His passion for rehabilitation psychiatry was evident with his close association to Fountain House Lahore that was started by his late father Prof Rashid Chaudhry. He became Executive Director of this institution after death of his father and brought this facility at the top in terms of a centre of excellence in the field of psychosocial rehabilitation. Equally, with his enthusiasm for Rehab Psychiatry, his profound understanding of religious and spiritual beliefs of his patients, he was always mindful of these processes.

He was a gifted man with a lot of abilities. With such a workload at his Medical College and Fountain House, it is surprising that he could make time for his other voluntary work. He ran a free clinic for Epilepsy (uninterrupted for more than 20 years) at a charity hospital and also contributed significantly for training and teaching to general public, primary care physicians, students of Psychology and social work.



Being an outstanding academician, he published more than 140 papers in different peer reviewed journals, published 10 books and monographs on different topics of mental health and presented his scientific work in more than 125 international conferences. He also received *DR. (MISS) ROSE MADAN PRESIDENT'S GOLD MEDAL* for best research scholar of Fatima Jinnah Medical College, Lahore, for the year of 2001 from the President of Pakistan. He was Convenor of Pakistan Medical Research Council's (PMRC) Expert Panel of Psychiatry (2007-2010) and a member of the Council's Technical Advisory Committee (2007).

He will always be remembered for his services to Pakistan Psychiatric Society. He was president of PPS at the time of his death and in this role he made sure that PPS emerges as a representative association of professionals at national and international levels. His efforts to uplift national mental health services will always be written in golden words in the history of Pakistani psychiatry. Psychiatry in Pakistan has indeed suffered an irreparable loss.

Not surprisingly, Haroon became a world-renowned figure with his contribution to World Psychiatric Association (as WPA Zonal representative for Western and Central Asia 2002-2008), Member WPA Operational Committee on Scientific Meetings, Secretary WPA Section on Rural Psychiatry & founder member of WPA Section on Psychiatry in Developing Countries), World Association of Psychosocial Rehabilitation (as Regional Vice President and Board member since 2003), World

Federation of Mental Health (currently Vice President Eastern Mediterranean Region), Indo Pak Punjab Psychiatric Society (founder General Secretary), SAARC Psychiatric Federation (current General Secretary) and South Asian Forum (founder member and Secretary for Pakistan-Chapter). He was an extraordinary conference organiser and had organised a number of international meetings in Pakistan. He will be remembered for organising the first international Congress of WPA's Section on Psychiatry in developing Countries and WPA's regional meetings in addition to many other scientific activities for WAPR, South Asian Division of Royal College of Psychiatrists UK, SAARAC, SAF and WFMH.

He was indeed a special person and everyone, who came across him, soon became aware of the velocity & force of his intellect, but he remained modest and unassuming with it, always gentle and displaying a respectful manner to any contrary opinions. He was massively inspirational and motivated huge loyalty of his trainees, colleagues and above all his patients. His life was an open book. He loved the joy of his dedication to

his professional work and was proud of his devotion to the patients, especially the poor. He was a generous, caring and a brilliant psychiatrist who enjoyed a very high stature among his peers. He was gifted with high intelligence, equable temperament, outstanding passion, sense of humour and integrity. Every one will miss him. We must bow to the will of Almighty – it does seem that the good die young.

He will of course be remembered for his warmth and generosity and his wife (Maryam) and four children (Saad, Shehrish, Waqas and Ahmad) will continue missing him for his love and affection along with countless other “children” of his inspirational practice and teaching of psychiatry.

May God rest his soul in peace and give all of us strength to bear this loss.

Dr. Afzal Javed

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