

Migration adventures

IN CONVERSATION WITH PROFESSOR SHAHED QURAISHI

One of the most inspiring stories in this issue comes from our very own **Shahed Quraishi, OBE**. His first mentor in the UK, **Pat Bradley**, spoke with him about his fascinating journey.



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Shahed, by way of introduction could you briefly tell us about your family background, early education and decision to enter Dow Medical College in the 1980s?

My family tree originates from the Northern Indian city of Azamgarh and after the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, my parents migrated to Pakistan. My late father was a businessman with important trade links with Nottingham and the UK. My mother was a devoted housewife and mother who brought up my four siblings and me. My early education was at St Placid's School in Chittagong, Bangladesh, one of the best Catholic schools of the sub-continent. After surviving a tragic civil war, which resulted in the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971 we fled as refugees to Karachi, Pakistan. I then followed my sister into medicine and Dow Medical College, Karachi, graduating in 1985. My decision to go into medicine and ENT was probably influenced by the fact that I had nasal surgery as a 10-year-old after a football injury!

Did your achievements at medical school meet your expectations? Who were your mentors? What were your plans when you graduated in 1985? I know you worked in Karachi for 24 months to gain your registration.

Medical school was an interesting part of my life. During a period of military dictatorship in Pakistan, Dow Medical College was the epicentre of a progressive democratic struggle led by a very active left-leaning students' union of which I was a part. I was very fortunate to have Prof Adeeb Rizvi, a contemporary of Sir Roy Calne and Pakistan's leading transplant surgeon as my mentor in medical school. I spent my first two years undertaking my internship in Karachi and preparing for the PLAB exam (for GMC registration).

What made you come to the UK in 1987, when we first met? Had you decided to be an ENT surgeon or was it 'just a job'?

On graduating in 1985, my immediate group of friends decided to go for higher medical training in the West, encouraged by our mentors in medical school, all of whom had done their higher medical training in the UK during the '50s and '60s. I chose the UK as I had some senior friends in London who were kind enough to help me with the move. I was very fortunate to pass my PLAB exam on my first go and within 12 weeks of arriving in UK I was looking for my first training post in ENT. A friend suggested Nottingham as a good centre and was given your name as a contact. I still remember my first meeting with you in June 1987 at Queens' Medical Centre Nottingham, which led to my first training post in ENT and in the UK.

Since then, between 1987 and 2000 (some 14 years) you have worked on and off in Nottingham in many guises during your ENT training. How did your training in the UK differ from Pakistan? You spent a short time in Ireland (when working visas became a problem!)- how did that training experience expand your knowledge?

In those days non-EU trainees had to face major challenges and were not eligible to apply for career registrar jobs in the UK. There were visa restrictions as well. On your advice I managed to get a four-year registrar post in the Irish training scheme in Dublin. I returned to Nottingham in 1992 to continue my higher surgical training as a non-career senior registrar. Under the mentorship of Kevin Gibbin, Nick Jones and yourself I managed to complete my training on par with the 'official' trainees.

Pakistan has very few structured ENT training posts and the training programme



Not a worry in the world... as a three-year old on the family Morris Minor.



Family time in the 'Middle Kingdom', Beijing, June 2017.



“My decision to go into medicine and ENT was probably influenced by the fact that I had nasal surgery as a 10-year-old after a football injury!”



Organiser of the Mughal painting exhibition, 1989, Nottingham for the Cochlear implant appeal [R-L] Shahed Quraishi, Lord Mayor of Nottingham, Gerry O'Donoghue, Lady Mayoress, Prof Barry McCormick.

family.

After a few months of uncertainty I was fortunate in getting a consultant head and neck job at Doncaster, my mentors in Nottingham were very supportive during this time. Doncaster is a large district general hospital, the ENT service was very well organised under the leadership of Keith Hughes, who was instrumental in my appointment. After a few years, due to the reorganisation of the regional cancer services, I was nudged into a benign head and neck practice and developed a busy minimal access, day care parathyroid service.

You volunteered your career and time to patients and education. What has driven you to pursue such a heavy work schedule?

Soon after taking up my consultant post, I was encouraged to take up the post of Training Programme Director for South Yorkshire. I realised the multiple challenges that trainees were facing, including the lack of resources for training courses. In early 2004 the idea of launching the 'ENT Masterclass' first came into my mind as a high quality training platform, free at the point of delivery. Within a few years, this has grown beyond my wildest imagination into a

worldwide training platform in 12 countries across four continents. This has been the result of generous support from over 150 senior colleagues from the UK and all over the world who give their time and cover all their own costs. A true example of 'giving back' to the specialty. The feedback from trainees has been my greatest motivation.

Your wife Humaira is a general practitioner and your two children, Sarah and Natasha are both medical students. How do you find time together to detox from medical matters?

I am very fortunate that my wife and children have happily supported the ENT Masterclass phenomenon over the last 14 years. Quality family time has been the main casualty but careful time management and a loving family have also been the secret of success. Natasha and Sarah have taken up careers in medicine resulting in some dinnertime conversations drifting into the style of a ward round! The family detox model is travelling and we have had some very nice holidays together. The last was spending a couple of weeks last summer exploring the 'Middle Kingdom'... China.



INTERVIEWED BY



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