



Courtesy of Nighat Huda

Naeem Aon Jafarey

Pathologist and medical educationist. He was born on May 4, 1929, in Allahabad, India, and died of a brain cancer on Nov 2, 2015, in Karachi, Pakistan, aged 86 years.

In the development of Pakistani medical education Professor Naeem Jafarey's role and status was that of "a pioneer and an icon". That's the view of Professor Nighat Huda, Director of the Department of Health Care Education at Liaquat National Hospital and Medical College in Karachi, and an educationalist who worked with Jafarey for many years. Her words are endorsed by another colleague who knew and admired Jafarey. Professor Zulfiqar Bhutta holds the Robert Harding Chair in Global Child Health and Policy at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, and is also Founding Director of the Center of Excellence in Women and Child Health at the Aga Khan University in Karachi. He recalls what happened when the *Lancet* Commission on the Education of Health Professionals for the 21st Century was published in 2010. "Professor Jafarey was one of the first people to pick up on it", he says. "He insisted we must do something about it. On his own, he organised a whole series of meetings in Karachi and around to ask how we could make it happen." He was ahead of his times, Bhutta adds.

Jafarey trained at King Edward Medical University in Lahore, the oldest such school in the country. On graduating in 1955 he moved to a house job at the nearby Mayo Hospital where he then spent a couple more years working as a medical officer for the Pakistan Medical Research Council. By now he'd opted to specialise in

pathology; he worked for a year as an instructor at the State University of New York's Downstate Medical Center. Returning to Pakistan, he became an Assistant Professor of Pathology in Karachi's Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC), the institution that served as his base until retirement in 1989 as Professor of Pathology, a status he'd achieved 16 years previously. During that time his main scientific interest was in cancer, particularly oral cancer, says Professor Shahid Pervez of the Department of Pathology at Aga Khan University Hospital. Karachi has a high incidence of the disease, a consequence of the widespread habit of chewing paan. "He was concerned that the city, in spite of its size, now has no formal cancer registry", Pervez adds. Even in the last 6 months of his life Jafarey was among those trying to get it re-established.

But Jafarey's true passion was medical education. What prompted it? Huda can't say for sure, but points to an event in 1974. "He attended a WHO training programme for medical educators and he was selected to participate in a workshop on educational planning and evaluation", she recalls. Maybe this served to crystallise his interest. Either way, he subsequently became the Co-director of Education at the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP)—which is where Huda first met and worked with him. "He was keen on preparing physicians for local needs, exposing them to local health situations", she says. "He also advocated changes in teaching and learning practices. He wanted to encourage more critical thinking among students." Bhutta remembers how Jafarey also emphasised the importance of public health and primary care, and the value of outreach services. "His contribution was enormous because he was able not only to generate interest but to encourage others to follow in his footsteps." The momentum he'd instigated was maintained, and reshaped the CPSP's core training programme.

After his retirement from JPMC, he served as Director of Postgraduate Studies at the Dr Ziauddin Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences, and as Professor of Educational Development at Karachi's Aga Khan Medical College. Jafarey's final major role was as Vice Chancellor from 1995 to 2004 of Ziauddin Medical University, also in Karachi. This offered him a further opportunity to put his educational ideas into practice. "He was a very cool person, very rational, very reassuring, but also very dynamic and enterprising", says Pervez. "He was softly spoken and never got angry", adds Huda. Bhutta talks of Jafarey's legacy: "He left behind a large number of people in various provinces of Pakistan who have trained very specifically through a programme that he initiated." Bhutta finishes on a more personal touch: "You would not find a single mean bone in his body." Jafarey is survived by his wife Sadiqa, a retired and also distinguished Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Geoff Watts