

Our Teacher: Prof Abu Zafor

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Prof. Dr. Abdullah Al Shafi Majumder
General Secretary, Bangladesh Cardiac Society

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Prof Abu Zafor was one of the architects of the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases and the Institute was the foundation of cardiovascular science in our country. In that sense he will be remembered forever by the cardiologists and the cardiac surgeons of the country.

He hailed from Pabna and passed MBBS from Dhaka Medical College in 1963. He went to UK and in 1971, he obtained MRCP. He returned back in 1976 and joined Rajshahi Medical College, later IPGM&R. In 1980, he joined the ICVD. He became the Director of the Institute in 1989 and worked till 1994. He was transferred as the Professor of Cardiology in IPGM&R from where he retired from the government services in 1995.

He was a great teacher, a teacher by heart, with unique characteristics. He used to teach not a topic but the idea

behind the topic. He tried to spread the philosophy of teaching to his students. He used to light the torch to follow the path of learning.

As a clinical teacher he was superb. He was an example for us as a role model in the bed side teaching. He very often made extensive round of seeing the admitted patients. He expected that the doctor in charge of the bed should have thorough knowledge regarding the condition of the patient. His clinical assistant /registrar was assigned to coordinate duty doctors without any excuse

He made in-depth reading of electrocardiogram. He made us understand that critical observation of electrocardiogram might provide decisive clue for the diagnosis of a disease. He was often found in the echocardiogram room to provide hands-on training to



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his students and the junior doctors. There is no exaggeration when we hail him as the “ Pioneer in Echocardiography” of Bangladesh.

In the early days of the Institute, he was a regular operator in the cath lab. He had keen interest in implanting the permanent pacemaker. He personally brought the first pacemaker in Bangladesh while returning to the country. 5th November 1977 marks a historic day for the treatment of cardiovascular diseases in Bangladesh, as Prof. Dr. Zafar performed the installation of this Pacemaker in IPGM&R for the first time in the history of Bangladesh.

He was the person from whom the students could learn the scientific information regarding the operation of a pacemaker. It was a great opportunity for the students as there was not easy access to the latest scientific

development in the eighties. (His acceptance as an operator of permanent pacemaker was evident by the fact that he implanted permanent pacemaker on Late National Professor Mohammed Ibrahim).

There are many examples of his humane qualities. I may cite one case. Once he became annoyed with a doctor working in his unit. Later he came to know that he had a child who needed special care and from then he became soft to him and provided a part time job in his chamber! In another situation he used to refer his patients to a junior doctor with instruction that in any problematic case he would review the case in hospital echo machine ,if necessary!

He was a man of integrity and honesty to the highest quality to me, like his other students he was an “Idol” whom we cherished to follow in our professional life.