



# ASSOCIATION OF PAKISTANI PHYSICIANS OF NEW ENGLAND (APPNE)

## SPRING 2020 NEWSLETTER

### Message from the Board:

**Assalam-o-Alaikum;**

We welcome you to our first newsletter! You will find this newsletter to be very informative and educational. We hope you like the design, format and new ways of sharing our knowledge and news with you!

18 years ago, a group of Pakistani Physicians came together and decided to form New England Chapter of APPNA and named it Association of Pakistani Physicians of New England (APPNE). Since its inception, APPNE members have worked tirelessly to improve lives of people both in Pakistan and in the US. APPNE has collaborated and supported Pakistan Association of Greater Boston (PAGB), Organization of Pakistani Entrepreneurs (OPEN), Comprehensive Disaster Response Services (CDRS) and Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA). Our Physicians have regularly volunteered at Lowell Community Health Center (LCHC), Worcester Islamic Center (WIC) and have spent hundreds of hours at many Medical Camps.

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, we cancelled this year's annual meeting but we do want to stay in touch with you and keep you posted with our social & charity work.

This newsletter will be posted on our website, our Facebook page and will be emailed to all those interested. We always appreciate your feedback as we strive to work together to make a difference in this world. Please send your suggestions to [appne1947@gmail.com](mailto:appne1947@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

APPNE Board  
74 Allds Street,  
Nashua, NH 03060  
[www.appne.net](http://www.appne.net)

### *In this Issue:*

**Message from  
Immediate Past  
President**

**APPNE's Response to  
COVID-19 Pandemic**

**APPNE Elections 2020**

**HIV Crisis in Pakistan**

**Diabetes Trail Project**

**Summary of APPNE  
Activities - 2019**



## Message from Immediate Past President:

The APPNE family is extremely concerned about the current situation, the Corona Pandemic. Incredibly, nothing like this has been witnessed in living memory. This event has been likened in its severity and possible outcomes, to the Spanish Influenza H1N1 in 1918 that infected 500 Million people world wide.

As the Pandemic unfolds it is clear that we are also headed towards 'The Second Great Economic Depression'. Besides establishing a COVID-19 fund to provide monetary support to our neighbours and our community, we have also worked with our mental health providers and counselors in the New England region to help with the many challenges faced by our members.

Myself and the APPNE Board have collectively decided to forgo our 18th Annual Meeting. Instead we ask, you to contribute towards funds for HIV and the flu vaccination campaign. Our first edition of the APPNE newsletter will provide details of our work, both in the USA and in Pakistan along with our social and political engagements.

It has been a both a privilege and a pleasure to serve as President of APPNE. I am grateful to the members of the Board for giving me the opportunity to work with them. I hope that you, our community of friends and well wishers, will continue to support us, critique us and appreciate the work that we do and I will do my best to continue to serve this wonderful organization.

Asimah Sharif Qayyum, MD

## APPNE's Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

The novel coronavirus has caused havoc around the world and it remains a devastating and deadly disease with no definite treatment. By the time this is over, millions will be infected and thousands would have lost their lives. APPNE Physicians are working in front lines in healthcare facilities across the New England. Our members participated in Public Education Seminars organized by Worcester Islamic Center (WIC). APPNE collected contributions from its members which were donated to soup kitchens in MA, NH & RI to help our fellow countrymen greatly impacted by this outbreak.

## APPNE Elections 2020

APPNE held its biennial elections in March. Following members were elected to the new Executive Board for the year 2020-2022.

- 1. Yousaf Shaikh, MD - President**
- 2. Saud Javed, MD - Vice President**
- 3. Safana Mushtaq, MD - Secretary**
- 4. Akmal Sarwar, MD - Treasurer**

Drs. Nida Arif from NH, Sadaf Ali from RI, Qaiser Khan & Ahmed Daniyal Siddiqui from MA will become new Members-at-large. Please join us in welcoming the new Executive Board.

### Election Commission:

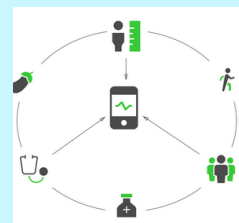
Iftikhar Hussain, MD  
Jamila Khalil, DMD  
Muhammad Ramzan, MD

On 25 April 2019, the local administration in Larkana district was alerted by media reports of a surge in human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) cases among children in Ratodero Taluka, Larkana district, Sindh province. From 25 April through 28 June 2019, a total of 30,192 people were screened for HIV, of which 876 were found positive. Eighty-two per cent (719/876) of these were below the age of 15 years. Illiteracy, lack of awareness in rural areas, reusing of contaminated disposable syringes, malpractice by impersonators as healthcare providers & non-adherence due to lack of access or high cost of antiretroviral therapy (ART) are the leading causes of HIV crisis in Pakistan.

Our affiliate member Dr Fizza Gillani in collaboration with Brown University Center For AIDS Research (CFAR) did series of webinars for awareness of HIV, it's transmission and co-infections. She has also personally visited Pakistan multiple times and has collaborated with National AIDS Control Program (NACP). In an effort towards early detection and treatment, APPNE has planned a fundraiser for providing HIV Diagnostic kits and Disposable syringes to the NACP. Our goal is to collect **\$25,000** to help fight HIV crisis. You can make donations online at **[www.appne.net](http://www.appne.net)**.



Diabetes is growing at epidemic proportions with genetic, epigenetic and environmental etiologies. We can prevent and halt its progression through a combination of prescriptions including diet, exercise, medications, insulin. APPNE supported Glucose Trail Inc. a registered charity organization working in the suburbs of Islamabad, Pakistan to train healthcare workers and provide remote medical interventions to help patients manage diabetes. The pilot project has shown promising results.

A graphic showing a green trail with yellow hexagonal markers, with the text "Glucose Trail" written in green.

## Summary of APPNE Activities - 2019

### Free Dental Clinic Swat, Pakistan

Last year, past President, Dr. Salman Malik, visited the Mother & Child Health Center in Swat, an outpatient clinic run by Comprehensive Disaster Response Services (CDRS). Along with providing basic oral surgery care to the local population, APPNE made a \$4,000 donation, that allowed the purchase of an abdominal/chest X-ray unit. With help from volunteers and APPNE, The clinic can now see hundreds of patients who would have had to travel to distant hospitals for diagnostic care.



### Annual Meeting 2019

APPNE successfully hosted its 17th Annual Meeting at Hilton Boston Logan Airport on April 20th. It was a well attended event and we were joined by over 150 members of local Pakistani community in RI, NH and MA. Medical lecture on Non-Surgical Fat Removal was given by Dr. Babar Rao, Professor of Dermatology, RWJMS, NJ. It was followed by delicious food from Punjabi Grill. The audience were enthralled with sufi music from Malaika Faisal with tribute to legendary Abida Parveen.





# Summary of APPNE Activities - 2019

## Young Physician Seminar

At the sidelines of APPNE's Annual Meeting in April 2019, APPNE hosted Young Physicians Guidance Seminar. The program was led by Elizabeth Ingraham, VP ECFMG and Residency Program Directors Drs. Rizwan Naeem, Sajid Saraf and Haq Nawaz. It was an interactive QA session participated by more than 40 young Physicians who received guidance on writing CV, avoiding fatal mistakes in the application, path for fellowship and alternative carriers.



## APPNE is Anti-War and supports peaceful resolution of Kashmir issue

After India and Pakistan came close to war in Feb 2019, APPNE Members actively participated in protests across the New England against the war. APPNE Members stood with Kashmiris when India revoked article 370 and imposed security lockdown. APPNE members spent 'A day on the Hill' and met with Congressmen to highlight the lockdown of Kashmir and Violation of human rights. APPNE Members also participated in advocacy workshop "Day of Action for Kashmir" organized by PAKPAC, Pakistani American Political Action Committee, Washington DC.

## Flu Vaccination Campaign

One of APPNE's community projects is to vaccinate the most vulnerable members of our society (underserved and uninsured).

Last fall, APPNE collected donations from its members and with help from volunteers, successfully held nine free flu vaccination clinics in the New England Area mosques. Here is brief synopsis:

6 in Massachusetts  
2 in New Hampshire  
1 in Rhode Island

One free flu clinic was held in collaboration with Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA).

Total of 116 adults and children were successfully vaccinated. We plan on organizing another series of free flu vaccination clinics later this year. If a vaccine against COVID-19 is developed, we will organize COVID vaccination clinics too.

