

Access to Quality Healthcare for All

Patient Welfare Programme, Pakistan Annual Report 2020



Our Patient Welfare Programme

Enabling Access to Quality Healthcare for All

The Patient Welfare Programme (PWP) at the Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH) can be a life saver. It opens the door to the Hospital's world-class, comprehensive care for patients with a wide range of conditions who might not otherwise be able to access treatment due to their financial situation. Patients who receive assistance from the Patient Welfare Programme in the form of welfare and/or zakat, are given the same level of care as those who can afford quality health care, so that everyone is treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

The Programme was established when the Hospital was founded in 1985 and began disbursing funds a year later. With the help of PWP and the generosity of donors who support it, patients from low-income backgrounds are able to access the broad range of hospital, clinical, diagnostic, and laboratory services available at AKUH. The institution is committed to enabling access to quality healthcare regardless of religion, gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic background, or place of residence.

Thanks to your generosity, no patient who comes to AKUH is ever turned away.



Our doctors and nurses are trained to deliver comprehensive, compassionate care to all patients, regardless of ability to pay

The Impact of Your Gift

5.39 million+

Patient visits supported by your generosity since 1986

21.05 billion

PKR disbursed to indigent patients since 1986

2.94 billion

PKR disbursed in welfare and zakat in 2020

2,782

Gifts to PWP, Pakistan in 2020

795,000

Patient visits supported by welfare and zakat in 2020

1 in 4

Patients at AKUH, Pakistan are supported by PWP

1 in 3

Patients in the General Ward at AKUH are supported by PWP

Leading the Charge Against COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed an unprecedented challenge to hospitals and healthcare workers around the world. AKUH took the lead early on and was the first private hospital in the country to develop a test for the virus. Pakistan's first COVID-19 patient was admitted to AKUH and successfully treated. AKUH also established a testing centre and protocols for the safest and highest quality treatment of COVID and non-COVID patients. Experts at AKU have been working closely with the Provincial Government to provide pro-bono training and technical assistance on COVID-19 critical care to healthcare professionals working in the public sector.

The Hospital instituted rigorous infection-control protocols, as per the guidelines of the WHO and the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. This included the creation of an Acute Care Unit to treat critical COVID-19 cases, a Clinical Decision Unit within the Emergency Department, and a separate COVID-19 Diagnosis and Treatment Zone. The Acute Care Unit was redesigned with a revamp of ventilation systems; an air-handling unit that supplies 100 percent fresh air to the area at all times; and the installation of high-powered exhaust fans to remove air from the system and emit it into the environment after filtration. A glass enclosure with positive air flow has also been built inside the Unit, where the staff are protected while not tending to patients. A vestibule was created overnight to prevent contaminants from infecting others outside the Unit.

A lot has happened in the past year. Much has also changed, including science, medicine, and technology. One thing has not – thanks to your generosity and support, the Patient Welfare Programme at AKUH continues to provide world-class patient care regardless of ability to pay.

Our Patient Welfare Programme for COVID-19 in 2020:

24,584

COVID-19 PCR tests conducted with support from PWP

1,031

COVID positive patients supported by PWP

PKR 206 million

disbursed for COVID-19 treatment and testing for deserving patients

Areas of Excellence

Paediatrics

Paediatric care is among the more sought-after services offered at AKUH. Each year, the Paediatric Emergency Care Unit treats more than 36,000 children. Our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), generously supported by donors, is the most advanced neonatal ICU in Pakistan, is equipped with 24 beds and provides round-the-clock care and monitoring for our youngest patients. The NICU sees patients not only from all over Pakistan, but also from the UAE, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia. In addition, AKUH physicians and nurses perform more than 600 paediatric cardiac procedures annually on children born with Congenital Heart Disease (CHD), helping them not only to survive, but also to thrive.

In 2020, the Patient Welfare Programme provided financial assistance for the treatment of more than 2,600 children from low-income families.





Children from low-income households are prioritised by the Patient Welfare Programme

Areas of Excellence

Orthopaedics

The Musculoskeletal and Sports Medicine services at AKUH provide state-of-the-art care for patients with orthopaedic and rheumatic conditions. Patients have access to all of the necessary diagnostic tools, from high-quality laboratory tests to X-rays to MRI scans, all under one roof. Our surgeons are fellowship-trained and offer cutting-edge surgical expertise in trauma, joint replacement, foot and ankle injuries, arthroscopy, sports medicine, paediatric surgery, oncology, spine surgery, and more.

Our Patient Welfare Programme ensures that patients in need of support get the care they need to live healthy and productive lives. In 2020, the Programme disbursed PKR 81 million to over 390 eligible orthopaedic patients.



Areas of Excellence

Neurology

At AKUH, our doctors and nurses offer cutting-edge, specialised care to treat a wide range of neurological conditions. The Hospital's Epilepsy Programme is the first of its kind in the country, with state-of-the-art technology that detects abnormalities in the electrical activity of the brain. We also created the first stroke unit in Pakistan; that unit offers weekly multi-disciplinary stroke clinics. And AKUH was the first institution outside of North America to perform an awake craniotomy using a neuro-robotic exoscope, which enhances surgical precision and shortens the patient's recovery time.

Through AKUH's Brain and Mind service line, the Patient Welfare Programme disbursed more than PKR 133 million to more than 620 deserving patients. Thanks to the Programme, no qualified patient is denied access to these life-saving services.



Areas of Excellence

Oncology

AKUH is the only centre in Pakistan with a multidisciplinary team dedicated to the treatment and care of adults and children with cancer. The Hospital's Oncology Services offer comprehensive care, from chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and bone marrow transplants to a range of support groups to help meet patients' emotional needs. In addition, the Oncology Services offer the only home-based palliative care service in Pakistan, with the aim of treating everyone with the dignity and compassion they deserve.

The Oncology team treated over 7,600 patients in 2020. The Patient Welfare Programme covered more than PKR 155 million of the cost for qualifying individuals.



Areas of Excellence

Heart and Lungs

AKUH offers multiple medical specialties under one roof. This enables our doctors in Heart, Lung, and Vascular Services to work closely with doctors in other departments to ensure both a holistic approach and the most advanced treatment available in Pakistan. Our cardiac services constitute the largest centre of its kind in the region and include a full range of prevention and diagnostic tools and interventions. And our Pulmonary and Critical Care Services are equipped to handle a wide range of pulmonary disorders, from the simplest outpatient procedure to the most complex critical care.

In 2020, the Patient Welfare Programme covered more than PKR 183 million of the cost for over 750 qualifying individuals.



Transforming Lives With Your Gift



In December 2020, a team of surgeons and support staff at AKUH successfully separated conjoined twins in an eight-hour surgery. Conjoined twinning is a very rare congenital anomaly, with an overall incidence of 1 in 250,000 births. Only twice has this extraordinarily complex operation been performed at AKUH.

Nine-month-old Muhammad Ayan and Muhammad Aman were joined at the abdomen, and the brothers shared a small portion of the liver. Conducted under the leadership of paediatric surgeon Dr Zafar Nazir, the operation was the work of a multi-disciplinary team of experts in paediatric surgery, anaesthesiology, and radiology, with stand-by support from specialists in gastrointestinal surgery and neurosurgery. In total, more than 50 clinical and administrative staff were involved.

The twins' father shared, "It was an extremely challenging journey for us. Before coming to AKUH, I had a dream that Ayan and Aman were separate. My family and I were convinced that this hospital is for the rich, that receiving treatment here would never be a possibility for us. But Allah made the Aga Khan University Hospital the saviour of my children. The doctors told us to not worry about the expenses, as the Patient Welfare Programme would cover them completely."

"This is a rare procedure that the hospital has performed only twice," commented Dr Zafar. "Coordinating the effort required a tremendous effort, both inside and outside the Operating Room. But all our hard work was more than repaid by the sight of two boys gaining a new life."

Transforming Lives With Your Gift



"My son is the life of the house and he always makes us all laugh", said Aftab Baloch, father of 11-year old Muhammad Ismail". We are from Sahiwal but we made our way to Karachi because I wanted Ismail to have the best treatment available", Aftab told us in the waiting room of the physiotherapy clinic at AKUH.

Just over a year ago, Ismail started complaining of headaches followed by nausea and vomiting. In April 2020, Ismail had two seizures. "We were extremely concerned and rushed him to the nearest hospital in our town. The attending physician asked us to get a CT Scan done which revealed that he had developed a medical condition in his brain" recalled Aftab.

"We were fearful of hospitals due to the increasing number of COVID-19 cases in Pakistan. However, when we came to AKUH, we were pleasantly surprised as we saw the frequent cleanliness and hygiene practices inside the hospital. All the nurses we encountered kept sanitising their hands and wore gloves whenever they would examine Ismail."

Ismail's medical condition was diagnosed as Arteriovenous Malformation, a tangle of abnormal blood vessels connecting the arteries and veins in the brain. He was advised an immediate neurosurgery, which he underwent in July 2020, followed by regular physiotherapy sessions to help him recover his motor skills.

"Dr. Ather Enam prepared us for what to expect post-surgery. We were gently informed that he would not be able to feel his leg after the surgery and that this should not be cause for concern. This is exactly what happened".

As Ismail walked out of the treatment area while holding his physiotherapist's hand for support, he had the brightest smile on his face. "Please let go of my hand", he said, "I can do this on my own".

Quality Healthcare for All

Established in 1985, the Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH) is a not-for-profit teaching hospital with a mandate to ensure quality care for all patients, regardless of their ability to pay. We are among the largest private health-care providers in Pakistan and East Africa. Our hospitals were the first in those regions accredited by the U.S.-based Joint Commission International, and our research and graduates have influenced health policy and practice nationally and internationally.



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

The Aga Khan University, Resource Development Department
Stadium Road, P.O. Box 3500, Karachi 74800
+92 21 3486 2909

Please feel free to contact us at: resource.development@aku.edu
Visit our website at: www.aku.edu/supportus