

Dear Alumni and Friends;

October, 2014

let's remember, to make a difference:

Every little thought counts

Every little effort counts

Every little gesture counts

Let's remember: A small pebble makes a ripple in a pond.

Let's join forces to create that ripple, to make that difference in the waters of Kashmir.

Do your bit.

Do it for now

Do it for the future

Do it for Kashmir!

Sent by Sheeba

Welcome to the third communication from "The Govt. Medical College, Srinagar, Alumni Association" (GMCAA). As mentioned previously, this communication is meant not only for GMC alumni but all the Kashmiri diaspora of physicians and healthcare professional.

You are surely aware of the energy and interest in the diaspora since last month. The key is to channel this energy the best way we can to provide the assistance we desire for Kashmir. Innumerable international and national conversations and phone conferences have and continue to take place amongst GMC alumni and the healthcare outreach group of the US based Revive Kashmir. The two are working closely to help our physicians and healthcare professionals to assist in this noble cause as best as possible.

Several meetings on ground in Srinagar took place since my last communication with you earlier this month. These meetings with the Dean & Principal Dr. Pampori were attended, at different times, by Drs. Ghulam Q. Allaqaband, Nisar Bakshi, Khalid Bashir, Altaf Hussain, Javid Iqbal, Ashraf Jallu, Faroque Khan, Rumana Makhdoomi, Abdul Rauf Mir, Ammer Syed and a number of faculty members. The Principal, in his last meeting with the group on October 14, gave a brief summary of how GMCAA came about. Meetings were also held with leadership of SKIMS and the director of J&K Health Services. Several visiting alumni met with key Govt. officials including the Divisional Commissioner, Health Secretary, Chief Secretary, Health Minister and the Chief Minister to facilitate Customs clearance in Delhi, Bombay airports and Lakhanpur.

A large number of alumni are actively engaged in fund raising and relief activities. You are probably engaged in the same. And a growing number is joining the GMCAA initiative and now are a part of this large list serve. I am sure you are aware of many who have visited the Valley to lend a hand in the recovery and rehabilitation process. I arrived on ground in Delhi on Oct. 24 and will be leaving for Srinagar in a few days. Here, several alumni and Kashmiri professionals and businessmen helped to put meetings together with suppliers, vendors and manufacturers to establish a base for your convenience.

It has been extremely rewarding to spend some time here in Delhi to navigate this very important part of the whole process in order to receive the best deals and prices for any supplies and/or equipment for Kashmir. You can be rest assured that your interests in any future relief through the GMCAA will be very well protected. In this regard, please note the following:

A:

- *If you decide to adopt a project, you will be able to control your project;*
- *Several of the alumni based on physical inspection and verifications and, in consultation with physicians and other professionals have compiled a **“Wish List” that is attached** here for your information and perusal;*
- *We now have the information about appropriate local vendors and suppliers to assist you in making your decision;*
- *We have pricing of most of the equipment and supplies so that you can tailor make your order to fit your budget;*
- *If you would like to deal with the vendors and suppliers directly, there will be minimal amount of red tape or bureaucracy. We will, however, ask you to coordinate your donation and gift through GMCAA since we have come to understand the process very well and have established credible and transparent agencies to work with. We have been able to establish exceptionally favorable pricing because of significant discounts;*
- *As previously mentioned, it is strongly recommended to **adopt a specific project**. This can be done by a group of donors or a region. Alumni and*

other physicians in the US, UK, ME, Australia, New Zealand and other places can make a difference by joining in the relief effort.

B:

- *Our first experiment with the Indian customs was very cumbersome and tedious. GMCAA had arranged **The Interagency Emergency Health Kit 2011** as approved by WHO for the type of emergency faced in Kashmir (donated by IMANA). It was sent through Chinara International with Principal GMC as the beneficiary. It took about six weeks to get that through the Indian Customs after a very very tedious process. Part of the reason was our lack of full understanding of the customs process but main reason was that Indian Customs authorities did not ease any procedure. With the work of many, the package has finally been released by the Customs and Chinara International has taken the possession of the package. We have understood the process much better now and are in a position to help you if needed;*
- *For those of you who may be able to arrange significant equipment/supplies from overseas as donations are requested to review the **attached document from the Dept. of Commerce, Govt. of India** that has special section dealing with the donated equipment/supplies process and procedure for Customs. Specific requirements regarding documents you have to procure from the donor company or institution as well as the recipient institution are delineated;*
- *We will be happy to help you with the documentation from the recipient institution and the Govt. in Kashmir. But please note that you will need the specific document from the donor in order to get a waiver from customs.*

C:

- *A Vision and Mission statement has been suggested for GMCAA. Drs. Altaf Hussain and Javid Iqbal have developed the following for the alumni. Please feel free to suggest improvements:*

Vision:

- *The GMC Alumni Association shall strive to bring the Government Medical College to the level of outstanding medical institutions globally*

Mission: The GMC AA:

- *Shall try to promote the faculty and students of GMC to the level of world class institutions;*
- *Shall promote excellence in teaching and internationally recognized research in all fields of medicine and all its disciplines;*
- *Shall promote interaction between the GMC faculty and alumni members' globally involving exchange visits to prestigious departments locally and abroad for teaching and research promotion*
- *Shall strive to engage undergraduate and post graduate students in clinical training and research projects*

D:

Please forward contact information (especially e-mail) for any healthcare professional of Kashmiri heritage you may know for inclusion in this massive campaign. We have been fortunate that vast majority of our list serve is accurate. Only few (under 5 %) have come back undelivered. Those are as follows:

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If you know the correct e-mails for any of the above, please let us know.

And, finally, a website is under construction and will be ready within next 2 weeks. That will significantly facilitate the dissemination of vital information for everyone.

Looking forward to your comments and feedback. Thank you.

With my best.....Khalid

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