



Ambassador for pharmacy

July 6, 2016



Nadeem Zia (centre, blue tie)

HSA REPORT MAGAZINE, JULY 2016

Surrey Memorial Hospital pharmacist Nadeem Zia was recently invited as a guest speaker to the 19th International Pharmacy Conference and Exhibition in Lahore, Pakistan.

“I was very interested to go so I started planning the overseas trip,” said Zia. “My first challenge was getting vacation time, and the second was the expenses. I was partly sponsored by the Pakistan Pharmacists’ Association, so I made the trip. Another challenge was that I was new to Lahore, as I am from Karachi. I’m proud that I overcame all these challenges because the trip was worth it.”

Zia studied pharmacy at the University of Baluchistan, in Quetta, Pakistan in 1987. He left Pakistan in 1990, worked eight years in King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Center in Riyadh, then in 1998 moved to Canada with his wife and daughter. After working with Walmart Pharmacy in Mississauga, he moved to Surrey, to work in various community pharmacies before moving to Surrey Memorial Hospital in 2007.

Zia stayed connected with colleagues back home, giving online presentations to universities in Pakistan. This led to an invitation from the Pakistan Pharmacists Association.

The 19th International Pharmacy Conference and Exhibition, a three-day event, had over 2000 pharmacists participating, and more than 12 international guest speakers, including Zia. The topics presented included; public health, pharmacy practise, regulatory affairs, manufacturing and research. Zia presented “The Role of Pharmacist in Medication Management, a Canadian experience.

“I was invited to a few universities, community pharmacies, and hospitals, and am proud to see the excellent improvement in pharmacy practices, now very similar to Canadian pharmacies.”

“I had an excellent experience in such a short time span of eight days where I met over five hundred pharmacy students, practicing pharmacists in various fields, and some old colleagues and classmates. I was surprised to notice most of the participants came to me and introduced themselves saying that they know me from Facebook.

“I shared my Canadian pharmacy practices and learned Pakistani pharmacy practices and their challenges, which include implementation of policies, budgetary challenges, development of pharmacists and procedures in practice and training.”

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