

## Obituary

Philip Paul D'Sousa MD, FACS, FAAOS  
Born 11th June 1940 - Died 24th May 2006



Dr. Philip Paul D'Sousa (PD to his residents) died at the age of 66 years in his home in Long Island, New York after losing a courageous fight to cancer. The world has lost

a compassionate, decent man, and we are poorer having no longer with us a much loved, valued colleague, a friend, and an excellent teacher and mentor. It is awfully hard to

maintain composure when opening an email of condolence to find words of sympathy and a line that says it all - "He was my favorite teacher!"

Dr. D'Sousa was born in Karachi, Pakistan to a family that had migrated from Goa, India. He received his early education in Karachi from St. Patrick's High School and DJ Science College. He distinguished himself by bagging the second position in the University of Karachi and was awarded a Government of Pakistan merit scholarship. With this, he gained admission to the prestigious Dow Medical College in 1960 and passed his professional examinations with flying colors. He was house surgeon and registrar in general and orthopedic surgery at the Civil Hospital from 1965 to 1969, and after seeing few opportunities for good training in orthopedics in Pakistan he proceeded to the United States. He served as rotating intern at Queen's Hospital in New York (January-December 1970) and then successfully survived the rigors of a competitive orthopedic residency at the Long Island Jewish Medical Centre (January 1971-1975). During his training he received several awards for best presentations at local and international meetings, and after clearing his American Boards in Orthopedic Surgery was elected as Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. He worked for many years as Attending Surgeon at the Long Island Jewish Medical Centre, and was member of many prestigious professional organizations.

In 1988, Dr. D'Sousa left his lucrative practice to join The Aga Khan University, which was still in its infancy, as Chief of Orthopedics Surgery. He converted the orthopedics services in AKU into a vibrant section of the Department of Surgery before returning to the US in 1997. He initiated the first structured training programme in orthopedic surgery and attracted many bright young medical graduates to it. Today, it is the graduates of this programme that form the backbone of orthopedics in AKU and in other institutions in Pakistan. During his tenure in AKU, PD touched the lives of many residents and junior faculty members irrespective of their specialties. It is very difficult

to enumerate his contributions to the Department of Surgery in AKU in particular, and to orthopedic surgery in Pakistan in general.

I came to know PD when I rotated through orthopedic surgery as part of my general and pediatric surgery training. He was truly a wonderful man. As a surgeon, I think he was unsurpassed by his peers. He was knowledgeable and had a logical mind, but I also witnessed him as a compassionate, caring, and ethical surgeon. He would never hesitate to seek the opinion of his younger colleagues if it meant the betterment of patients. He was a dedicated teacher. I still remember him struggling with us during his off hours, and on weekends, to groom our presentations to excellence for national meetings and grand rounds. He also contributed large sums of money from his own pocket to fund residents' travel to make it possible for them to make presentations at national and international meetings.

PD had a great sense of humor and was an extremely funny story teller who could mimic different accents when needed. He was always immaculately dressed but on weekends I remember him appearing for his ward rounds with us dressed in American cowboy attire. PD loved driving exciting cars, reading curious, out of the ordinary books, doing crossword puzzles, and was an avid collector of antique watches and clocks.

In July 2005, Dr. D'Sousa was diagnosed to have unresectable cancer of the liver, but did not allow this news to be disseminated to his students and colleagues. Despite putting up a courageous fight, including volunteering himself for an experimental drug regimen, PD lost the battle last month. He is survived by his younger sister Ms. Celine D'Sousa (choti behan as he called her) who works for the United Nations, and by his many professional children. He will live on in our hearts and souls forever.

Zafar Nazir  
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