

HISTORY**EMINENT ANESTHETISTS OF PAKISTAN****Professor Rehana Shafi Kamal****FFARCSI, FFARCS, FCPS (Hon)**

Dr. Rehana Shafi Kamal served as a distinguished Professor of Anaesthesia and the Founding Chair of the Department of Anaesthesiology at Aga Khan University (AKU), Karachi, Pakistan. She played a seminal role in establishing and leading the department from its inception in 1985 until 2002, thereby laying the foundations of academic anaesthesiology at AKU and contributing significantly to the development of the specialty in Pakistan.

Dr. Kamal graduated with an MBBS from King Edward Medical College, University of the Punjab, Pakistan, in 1961, earning three gold medals. At a time when anaesthesia was an under-recognized specialty in Pakistan, she pursued postgraduate training in anaesthesiology in the United Kingdom, beginning in 1963. Despite significant personal and family responsibilities, she completed her specialist training and was awarded Fellowships of the Faculty of Anaesthetists of the Royal College of Surgeons from both Dublin and London in 1967. She subsequently obtained the Certificate of Higher Professional Training from the Faculty of Anaesthetists, Royal College of Surgeons of England, in 1975. Her advanced professional development included a Pain Fellowship at Queen's Medical University, Nottingham, United Kingdom, in 1998. In recognition of her exceptional contributions to the field, she was awarded an honorary Fellowship of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (FCPS) in Anaesthesiology in 2002.

Her academic and clinical career spans several decades across the United Kingdom, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. Prior to joining AKU, she held senior academic appointments, including Associate Professor and Head of Anaesthesia at King Abdul Aziz University Hospital, Jeddah. At Aga Khan University, she served as Associate Professor and Chairperson (1985–1990), Professor and Chair (1990–2002), and subsequently as Professor of Anaesthesia until her retirement in 2017. Notably, she established the first independent academic department of anaesthesia at AKU, setting a benchmark for structured anaesthesia services in the country.

During her tenure at AKU, Dr. Kamal led the development of comprehensive departmental and institutional policies that standardized anaesthesia and critical care practice. These included quality assurance and anaesthesia safety policies; protocols for preoperative assessment, fasting (NPO) regimens, day-care surgery, intraoperative monitoring, recovery room care, obstetric anaesthesia, perioperative diabetes management, and cleaning and sterilization of anaesthetic equipment. She also developed guidelines for anaesthetic equipment checks, utilization of departmental funds, and criteria for faculty appointment and promotion. In parallel, she spearheaded intensive care unit governance through operational policy documents and protocols addressing admission and discharge criteria, determination of brain death, invasive procedures, cardiac arrest management, nursing care, visitor policies, and medical coverage, alongside structured nursing education programmes.

Dr. Kamal was a pioneer in clinical ethics in Pakistan. She developed the terms of reference for the Hospital Ethics Committee at Aga Khan University—the first clinical ethics committee established at AKU and in the country—and served as its Chair until her retirement. During this period, she led ethics consultations and contributed to the resolution of complex clinical ethical dilemmas, while also developing institutional processes for ethics consultation.

Dr. Kamal introduced several landmark clinical innovations, including Pakistan's first preoperative anaesthesia clinic, hospital-wide cardiopulmonary resuscitation training programmes, and the development of cardiothoracic anaesthesia, critical care, pain management, and anaesthesia services outside the operating room.

In recognition of her exceptional contributions and lifelong dedication to academic Excellence Aga Khan University awarded her the distinguished title of Professor Emerita.



A national leader in postgraduate medical education, Dr. Kamal played a pivotal role in shaping anaesthesia training in Pakistan through the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP). She served as Dean of the Faculty of Anaesthesia, Examiner, Convener, and Supervisor for MCPS and FCPS programmes from 1987 to 2008, and continues to contribute as a CPSP Inspector for accreditation of training centres. She has also served as an examiner for fellowship examinations at the Universities of London and Riyadh. Her trainees now hold senior academic positions, including full professorships, and are contributing to anaesthesia education and clinical practice in Pakistan, the Middle East, the United Kingdom, and Ireland.

Her scholarly contributions include more than 50 peer-reviewed publications, over 50 published research abstracts, receipt of a University Research Council grant, editorial and peer-review roles for regional journals, and extensive national and international invited lectures. She was also awarded the Best Research Award at the 12th World Congress of Anaesthesiologists (2002).

Her academic excellence and leadership have been recognized through numerous honours, including the Outstanding Teacher Award at Aga Khan University, election as President of the Pakistan Society of Anaesthesiologists, and Lifetime Achievement Awards from the Pakistan Society of Anaesthesiologists and the Pakistan Association of Cardiothoracic Anaesthesia. She is widely regarded as an outstanding academician and anaesthesiologist, an exceptional teacher and critical thinker, and a compassionate mentor whose legacy continues to shape anaesthesia practice and education in Pakistan and beyond.

Dr. Rehana Shafi Kamal is married to Dr. Yousuf Kamal Mirza and is currently enjoying her retired life with her family.