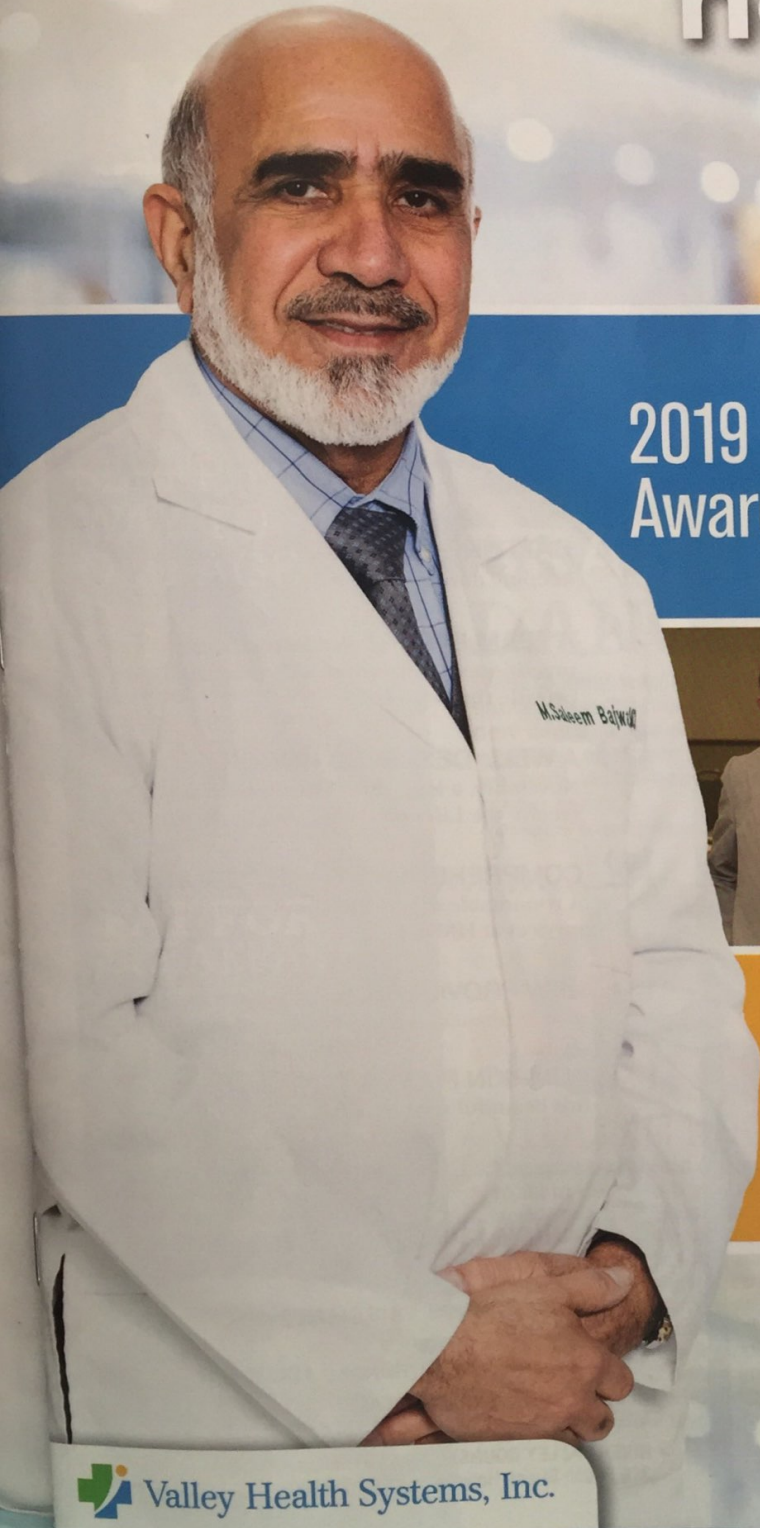


VALLEY

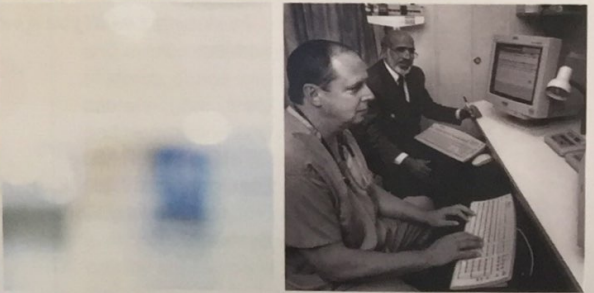
health & life




2019 Lifetime Achievement Award Winner M. SALEEM BAJWA, MD

» STEER CLEAR OF THE FLU

» COMPREHENSIVE CARE FOR WOMEN AND FAMILIES





A WELL-DESERVED HONOR

IN NOVEMBER, A LONGTIME HMC PHYSICIAN WILL RECEIVE THE 2019 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD.

IN HIS 40 YEARS at Holyoke Medical Center (HMC), M. Saleem Bajwa, MD, the former Chief of Medicine and President of the HMC medical staff, has played a key role in the hospital's growth. To honor his exemplary service, Dr. Bajwa will receive the HMC Lifetime Achievement Award at the gala on November 23. "I'm very honored," he says.

A LEADER IN HIGH-QUALITY CARE

Dr. Bajwa earned his medical degree at King Edward Medical College in Lahore, Pakistan, and completed his training at Catholic Medical Center and Queens Hospital Center in Queens, N.Y. Board-certified in internal medicine and pulmonology, Dr. Bajwa joined the HMC staff in 1979.

In addition to running a busy private practice in internal and pulmonary medicine, Dr. Bajwa has been an advocate for new programs at HMC. In the early 1980s, he helped launch The Work Connection and provided care for employees from many local industries until full-time medical staff members were hired.

In the 1990s, sleep medicine became an important field. Dr. Bajwa helped the hospital open the Sleep Lab in 1998. The Lab, which expanded a decade later, has provided a much-needed service in the area of sleep disorders, such as sleep apnea. Sleep disorders can lead to serious medical conditions, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, mood disorders, trouble driving and poor performance at work. Dr. Bajwa directed the Sleep Lab until 2018, when he worked with the hospital administration to recruit a board-certified physician in sleep medicine to take over the position.

Dr. Bajwa also served as director of the Respiratory Department, a position he still holds. He launched the Pulmonary Rehabilitation program in 2002 and oversaw a multidisciplinary team of healthcare providers. The rehabilitation program was expanded in 2012 to serve the growing number of patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other serious pulmonary diseases. "COPD is one of the leading causes of hospitalization, disability and death," he says. "It requires treatment on an ongoing basis. The rehabilitation program has become an essential component of patient care."

Until recently, Dr. Bajwa was the sole pulmonologist at HMC. Once again, he worked with the hospital administration to



Clockwise, from left to right: M. Saleem Bajwa, MD, reviews charts in 1986; with HMC Pulmonary Rehab Program team members in 2002; with HMC Sleep Lab manager Don McDonough in 2000; with HMC President and CEO Spiros Hatiras and Stephen Levine, MD, in 2013; and with his wife, Kaneez Fatima.

recruit two new physicians. Thanks to his efforts, HMC now has a Pulmonary Center, which offers bronchoscopy and other interventional procedures. "It was my dream that one day we would have a state-of-the-art department and could provide the full scale of pulmonary services," he says.

A COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

Dr. Bajwa, who has served on the HMC Board of Directors, is also dedicated to his community. He's one of the founding members and former president of the Islamic Medical Association of North America. Over the years, he's watched the organization grow to include more than 1,000 members and has been active in providing educational as well as humanitarian services. "I'm proud of the Association's relief work and volunteer medical missions," he says.

Dr. Bajwa is also a founder of the Islamic Society of Western Mass. He has held various positions in the Society and coordinates the interfaith and outreach programs. "I love coordinating the interfaith programs and promoting friendship, dialogue and mutual understanding between all religious denominations," he says. "That will continue to be my lifelong mission." Dr. Bajwa served as a trustee of the Hartford Seminary—a leading multi-faith teaching institute—for nine years and has been the Executive Director of the Islamic Council of New England for almost two decades.

For many years, Dr. Bajwa returned to Pakistan annually with his wife, Kaneez Fatima, and his children for vacation. During

most of these trips, he ran a small clinic in his home village. The clinic offers screening and preventive services for residents in the rural area he grew up in.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Dr. Bajwa has given up his private practice in internal medicine and pulmonary diseases. His focus is now on HMC's new Pulmonology Center. "That's a big change for me," he says. "I will miss my internal medicine patients, who became my friends over the past 40 years, but at the same time it gives me the opportunity to provide quality care in pulmonology." While he's not ready to retire, when he does he plans to spend more time with his three children and 10 grandchildren in Chicago and Palo Alto, Calif.

Dr. Bajwa lives in South Hadley with Kaneez. "She has been a vital partner and big supporter of my practice and all of my accomplishments," says Dr. Bajwa.

The November gala will not only celebrate Dr. Bajwa's Lifetime Achievement Award, but it will also recognize the hospital's ACE Awards finalists in the categories of best caregiver, best supporting employee, best leader and best physician. The black-tie-optional gala includes a seven-course chef's dinner, wine pairings and dancing to the O-Tones at the Log Cabin. It promises to be a special celebration for all. "My motto is to provide state-of-the-art care close to home," says Dr. Bajwa. "HMC has been a wonderful place. It has been very supportive in helping me to provide the best possible medical care to Valley residents."

* To learn more or to purchase tickets to the Holyoke Medical Center Annual Gala, please visit www.holyokehealth.com/gala19, email development@holyokehealth.com, or call 413.534.2579.

Holyoke Medical Center Annual

Gala

FEATURING
THE ACE AWARDS AND
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
OF M. SALEEM BAJWA, MD

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2019

The Log Cabin • 500 Easthampton Road • Holyoke, MA 01040

- Complimentary cocktail reception
- Seven-course chef's dinner and wine pairings
- Silent auction
- Dancing to the O-Tones

Tickets are still available! Purchase today!

Order tickets online at www.holyokehealth.com/gala19
or call (413) 534-2579 for more information.

All proceeds to benefit Valley Health Systems

 Holyoke Medical Center

 Holyoke Medical Group

 Holyoke VNA • Hospice Life Care

 River Valley Counseling Center

HolyokeHealth.com