



OBITUARIES

Anisha Malhotra

J S Bamrah, Aseem Malhotra



Anisha Malhotra was born on 14 December 1949 in Khatauli, India, and was brought up in Srinagar, Kashmir, and New Delhi. Her father, Jagdish Prasad Verma, was an engineer in the central government service and was one of the pioneers of All India Radio Kashmir. Her mother was a housewife. She had a younger brother, Deepak Verma, who emigrated to the US, and a younger sister, Anita Tamuli, who remains an Indian resident. It was while recovering in hospital from a cholecystectomy and appendicectomy, that an 11-year-old Anisha decided that she would like to study medicine, in order to be able to help other people. During her school holidays, she had enjoyed reading scriptures, such as Ramayana and other inspiring stories, and had been spiritually inclined since childhood.

Anisha joined the Institute of Medical Sciences at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, where she completed her MBBS in 1973. Later that year, she met her husband, Kailash Chand (a fellow doctor), while visiting Delhi and then began work at the Lady Hardinge College for Ladies, New Delhi, in 1974. She did her earlier training in medicine and anaesthetics, then she and Kailash got married in September 1974. In 1975, they moved to Kurukshetra, Haryana, where she worked as a medical officer in the district general hospital. Both of her sons were born in New Delhi—Amit in October 1975 and Aseem in October 1977. In 1978 Anisha joined her husband in the UK.

Apart from medicine, or indeed perhaps more than that, family values were of crucial importance in Anisha's life. When her husband sought a career in the NHS, she had an overwhelming desire to support him and ensure he was not without his two sons. She once said: "When my husband told me that he had got an attachment and that he wanted to go and do a diploma in tropical medicine, I said, 'OK you go ahead.' But when he came here, and he wrote his first letter, saying "Come and join me," I could see that it would be very difficult for him to move here on his own without his family. And I was living in India

with our two small babies, so I decided that I had to join him. It was a challenge. But I enjoyed it, because we had to be together."

An important factor in the family's decision not to return to India were the availability of education and NHS care for their son Amit, who had Down's syndrome.

Anisha's earlier career in the UK was as a junior doctor in psychiatry and anaesthetics at Trafford General Hospital, the birthplace of the NHS. For family friendly purposes, she switched careers and after completing her general practitioner training, she joined a group practice as a salaried partner in Manchester in 1985. Then on 28 October 1988, her son Amit died from heart failure at the age of 13. Her religious faith and tenacity saw her through what was a very stressful and testing time.

In 1998, she joined her husband as a partner in general practice in Ashton-under-Lyne. She retired after 18 years of contributions to general practice, devoting her time to family and religious matters, which were always part of her core values. Sadly, her health suffered during her later years. In December 2003, Anisha had a massive subarachnoid haemorrhage while on a visit to India. Although she recovered from the event, intermittent medical problems restricted her lifestyle considerably. Her resilient and somewhat resigned nature (that God is Supreme and He does everything for a purpose), along with the devoted support from her husband and son, now a consultant cardiologist, ensured that she had the care and comfort necessary to see her through some of her most challenging times owing to ill health. Her religious faith was enormously helpful to her throughout her life, and Anisha kept herself busy, reading scriptures, and contributing to religious websites.

Anisha died from septicaemia at Tameside General Hospital, Stalybridge, just short of her 69th birthday, after a short admission. In keeping with her life's journey, she was surrounded by close family and friends.

Biography

General practitioner (b 1949; q Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India, 1973), died from septicaemia on 29 November 2018

Published by the BMJ Publishing Group Limited. For permission to use (where not already granted under a licence) please go to <http://group.bmj.com/group/rights-licensing/permissions>