

# APCNA Pacemaker Bank in Pakistan

by Wajid Baig, MD



Dr. Wajid Baig

Chairman APCNA  
Pacemaker Project and Liason  
with other professional  
organizations.

*Every institution is known for its landmarks and events. APCNA Pacemaker Bank in Pakistan will be known as landmark project of APCNA. With the single objective to save lives of the people who can not afford such devices APCNA had no trouble getting the support from its membership. This is a perfect example of APCNA's collaborative effort.*

## Background:

Healthcare for many people in Pakistan is quite limited. There are never enough resources available for the multitudes who may need care. Government intuitions are stretched to the limits. Many Charitable Hospitals and Clinics are doing a remarkable job trying to meet the shortfall. It is a credit to the physicians and healthcare workers in Pakistan who are able to provide care for these millions of patients with the limited resources available. The care for cardiac patients is even more difficult and most often not affordable for the poor. There are hundreds of patients who need permanent pacemakers and defibrillators but cannot afford them. Last year Dr. Suleman and I visited a major Cardiac Center in Pakistan where they had 10 temporary pacemakers, all were in use. They often wait weeks for a permanent pacemaker to become available. It is commendable that there are many cardiologists who are trying to provide free services and obtain pacemakers from various philanthropic sources. There was a dire need to provide these patients professional and financial assistance to make pacemakers available for them. Imagine a deserving patient in Pakistan who can now get a Permanent Pacemaker and Implantable Defibrillator at no cost to the patient! No charge to the patient from the physician, No charge for the device, No charge for the follow up.

## The Magnitude of the Need:

There are hundreds of patients who need permanent pacemakers but cannot get it and will die because they cannot afford it. It was noted that even the big pubic cardiac institution had only 10 working temporary pacemakers for the entire patient population they served. Patients had to wait for weeks to have permanent pacemakers implanted. Dr. Azam Shafqat, at NICVD showed some data collected by one of his fellows on the last 150 implants. The average salary of the patients was about 6000-8000 Rupees ( \$100-133) per month. The average waiting

time for a permanent device with a temporary pacemaker in place was about 2 weeks. At today's rates a Permanent Pacemaker (PPM) implantation costs about Rs. 60,000-120,000 for the complete procedure. An ICD costs about Rs. 600,000 (Rs.6 Lakhs) and a Bivent- Defibrillator costs about Rs. 800,000 - 1, 200,000 (Rs.8-12 Lakhs), just the Defibrillator leads cost about Rs.100,000. While the pacemakers would be lifesaving measures for many patients the prohibitive costs for it would be unthinkable for many deserving patients to receive it.

Dr. Bashir Hanif is standing with the first patient who received the pacemaker vis APCNA-Rotary -HBI pacemaker bank at Tabba Heart Institute.





## Inauguration: The First Pacemaker Bank in Pakistan

The APCNA-Rotary Pacemaker Bank was officially inaugurated on December 18th 2007, in Karachi. The ceremony at the Marriott Hotel was well attended by physicians, philanthropists, press and media. Several Rotary office bearers and members were in attendance. The CEO of Tabba Heart Institute, Ms. Maryiam Tabba, and NICVD's Consultant, Dr. Azam Shafqat (one of the implanting Cardiologists) were also present.

Heartbeat International (HBI) was represented by Mr. Ashraf Hasnain. President APCNA, Dr. Rizwan Karatela spoke about the continued commitment of APCNA's mission to helping the standard of healthcare and cardiology education in Pakistan. The APCNA Pacemaker Bank project director, Dr. Wajid Baig elaborated the APCNA's initiative in bringing about the establishment of the first pacemaker bank in Pakistan. He pointed out the important contribution it will have for the deserving patients in Pakistan. He reported that so far two PPM's and one ICD had been implanted. The Karachi Pacemaker Bank will cover all of Karachi as well as the Provinces of Sind and hopefully Balochistan. Dr. Baig further outlined the workings of the Pacemaker Bank and emphasized that the cost of the procedure such as hospital charges, consumable, travel and follow up will be covered by funds raised by the Rotarain's and our generous members. The first fund raising event is planned for March 2008.

## APCNA Collaborative Efforts

When APCNA members learned about such need in Pakistan, there was a palpable passion among the members to make a difference in lives of these patients. In March 2005, at the ACC Annual Scientific Sessions in Atlanta the as APCNA team we met Mr. Wil Mick, the President of Heartbeat International; a non-profit organization based in Tampa, Florida, the world's premier provider of free, cardiac pacemakers, implantable defibrillators and medical care to needy patients around the world. For more than 20 years, they have served the indigent and ill in more than 30 countries, reaching families and hearts around the world. Unfortunately, there was no such pacemaker bank in Pakistan. It was APCNA's initiative to approach Heartbeat International for establishing the pacemaker bank in Pakistan. It was apparent that the task was monumental, as according to the Heartbeat International, the Pacemaker Banks must adhere to strict operating principles and must comprise of qualified and experienced physicians, an appropriately equipped and staffed hospital, and a local Rotary club or approved Social Agency. APCNA needed to have partners who could facilitate this task become a reality. Fortunately, we had a good team of dedicated doctors, Dr. Bashir Hanif, Dr. Azam Shafqat and Dr. Zahid Jamal in Pakistan who were enthusiastic to provide such professional services. The Rotary Club of Pakistan provided us the needed support and the local institutions; Tabba Heart Institute and National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) opened their doors wholeheartedly for this worthy cause. The things then fell into place.

## Special note of thanks



The CEO of Tabba Heart Institute, Ms. Maryiam Tabba, and NICVD's Consultant, Dr. Zahid Jamal, HBI - Mr. Ashraf Hasnain, Ovais Kohari and others.

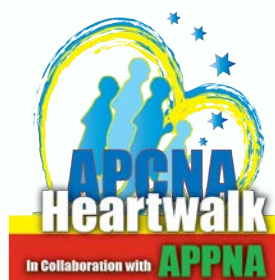
On behalf of APCNA and its members, we are extremely grateful to Mr. Wil Mick and Dr. Meniscalco from Heartbeat International who have guided us all through this process. We now have the help of Mr. Ashraf Hasnain, International Director of Heartbeat International. He has had several meetings with the organizers in Karachi and continues to help us. None of this could have happened without the hard work and dedication of Rotarian Ovais Kohari and his team. None of us are naïve enough to think that this one project will change everything for the patients in Pakistan. This is only a very small attempt to help these patients. It will take many more such projects to make a significant difference. We are proud that APCNA is making a start. What we are doing in Pakistan is just a start in terms of the needs of the deserving patients all over the country. We needed to start somewhere, and we have done so. Trying to improve the lives of even just a few patients will go a long way.



# APCNA Leads the way in Providing

## Life Saving Devices to the Deserving Patients in Pakistan

From the Archives - March 2012



**From your heart  
to their heart. DIL  
SAY DIL PAKISTAN**  
Help APCNA help  
the Poor Patients in  
Pakistan.

Over the last several years APCNA has worked extremely hard in establishing a transparent mechanism in which the deserving patients in Pakistan can get Permanent Pacemakers (PPM) and Implantable Cardiovertors Defibrillators (ICD's). These devices cost Thousands of US Dollars in North America and are beyond the resources available to a significant portion of the population in Pakistan.

Five years ago APCNA Partnered with Heartbeat International (HBI) in Tampa Florida and The Rotary Clubs in Karachi to set up the First Pacemaker Bank in Karachi. This Bank is one of the most efficiently run and successful projects jointly sponsored by Heartbeat International. Hundreds of devices have been implanted Totally Free of Cost to the patient at National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease's (NICVD) and Tabba Heart Institute (THI) in Karachi. Our experience in this project has lead to the next phase in this endeavor.

In December 2011 we proudly inaugurated the Dr. Nawab Khan Pacemaker Bank. An APCNA-Rotary Peshawar Pacemaker Project This is a philanthropic project sponsored by the members of APCNA and the Rotary Club in Peshawar. Dr. Naeem Khan, a founding member and Trustee of APCNA has been leading this effort to honor the work his father did for decades to help the patients in and around Peshawar. Professor Hafizullah, Dean, Khyber Medical University has graciously taken on this project as an integral part of providing cardiac care to the poor patients of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This unique project is totally financed by donations from our members and the general public. In addition to donated Pacemakers that our members take to Pakistan; the Pacemaker Bank will be purchasing these devices in Bulk in Pakistan.

The Third phase of Providing Pacemakers to the deserving patients in Pakistan is a Joint Project with University of Michigan and APCNA. Our local Partner in Pakistan is Indus Hospital. Dr. Bari and his team last December hosted Dr. Thomas Crawford and our APCNA Leadership in Karachi for a site visit. It was clear that Indus Hospital is the ideal partner for this project. We are in the final stages of approval from the Sindh Health Department and the FDA in the US. Once these permits are issued; we have the opportunity to provide hundred's of Certified Refurbished Permanent Pacemakers to patients at Indus Hospital. Dr. Wamique Yusuf has been working with Drs. Kim Eagle and Crawford from the University of Michigan on this project.

Our next step is to start a Pacemaker Bank in Punjab. We are working hard on finding the appropriate partners and resources to make this a successful endeavor Please support these projects with your generous donations.

Help APCNA help the Poor Patients in Pakistan.

*Dr. Naeem Khan, a  
founding member and  
Trustee of APCNA has been  
leading this effort to honor  
the work his father did for  
decades to help the patients  
in and around Peshawar.*



**Saving Lives**

It only takes a \$1000 to save a life of a deserving patient in Pakistan. Often this patient is the only breadwinner for the whole family. You can see how far the \$1000 will go.

# APCNA Pacemaker Project

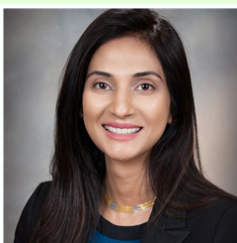
## Update 2017

Update - March 2017

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Chairman APCNA  
Pacemaker Project and Liason  
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**Dr. Maria Viqar**

Co-Chairperson, APCNA  
Pacemaker Project.

## APCNA Pacemaker Bank Project Update 2017

### APCNA Pacemaker Bank Project

One of the strongest projects of APCNA is the Pacemaker Bank Project. The APCNA-Rotary Pakistan Pacemaker Bank and its associated project Nawab Khan Pacemaker Bank continue to grow every year.

APCNA started this project with the help of Heartbeat International, Tampa Florida. An International Organization (<http://www.heartbeatsaveslives.org>), which is tirelessly working to alleviate the suffering of poor patients all over the world. Unfortunately the donated devices from this NGO cannot be shipped to Pakistan anymore. The Pakistan Customs authorities will not allow these devices to be imported, as their "Use by date" could be less than 6 months. Even though the devices are brand new and have a battery life of between 7-10 years. We have tried for over 2 years at all levels with officials in Pakistan but have not had any success.

As such, APCNA had no choice but to seek alternative options to continue our work in Pakistan.

Our Immediate Past President, Atique Mirza has worked very hard to develop a close working relationship with Medtronic. We negotiated with Medtronic to purchase New Devices at a subsidized rate, which

are delivered directly to the Implanting Institutions by the Medtronic Dealership in Pakistan. Mr. Shahid Manzoor is their Authorized dealer for Pakistan. They are supported locally and this has been working well.

Our MOU with Medtronic allows us to implant a Single/Dual Chamber PPM for under \$1000 per unit. This is a significant discount and I would like to thank all our members who worked hard and helped negotiate this deal. Our lawyers as well as the lawyers from Medtronic have reviewed this agreement to make sure that all IRS rules are being followed under the regulations, which govern a 501(C) 3 organization, such as APCNA. The EC felt very strongly that any process, which involves transfer of funds to Pakistan, should be absolutely transparent and well documented.

To allow us to purchase these new devices we then had to raise funds from our members and their friends.

I am extremely grateful to the hard work of our leaders who stepped up to the challenge and have helped us raise almost \$95,000 so far.

Fundraisers have been held in Orlando (twice), New York, Washington and most recently in Houston.

This could not have happened without the help of members like Tariq Shahab, and

