

Obituary

We were all recently shocked and deeply saddened by the loss of Prof. Ali Omar Shaabat, Professor and Consultant of Pediatric Neurology, King Abdulaziz University Hospital, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He died after a short battle with illness at the age of 52 years. Prof. Shaabat was the only brother among 5 sisters. He outlived both of his parents and buried his father only recently in 2006. He left behind a loving wife, 4 sons, and one daughter. Prof. Shaabat graduated from King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah in 1981. Among his classmates were many recognized physicians taking leading roles in the University and community. He then went to Canada for general pediatric training at St. Jon's, Newfoundland (1984-1988) and pediatric neurology training at Vancouver, BC (1988-1991). After joining the Department of Pediatrics at King Abdulaziz University Hospital, he became one of the most prominent and active pediatric neurologists in Saudi Arabia. He had many national and international publications and participated actively in most national pediatrics and neurology conferences. He held many clinical and administrative positions including 2 terms as the Chairman of the Department of Pediatrics. In 2002, Prof. Shaabat became the first Saudi physician to attain Professorship



status in the field of pediatric neurology. I personally knew Prof. Shaabat for many years and worked with him very closely. We also worked together on several research projects that resulted in important publications. He is one of the most compassionate, forgiving, humble, and non self centered individuals that I ever encountered. This is not my feeling alone, but also shared by all members of our department, his patients, students, and others who had a chance to know him well. During his illness, I had to see many of his patients who asked eagerly about him and prayed for a quick recovery. Their love and genuine concern was evident in their teary eyes before they expressed it in words. Throughout his illness, he had many very close friends and colleagues at his bedside, particularly Dr. Wasim Anshasi, Hussein Bamashmous, Saad Al-Saedi, Abed Al-Hazmi, and Mohammed Muzaffer. His memory, wisdom, and guidance will remain in the hearts and minds of all those who had the chance to interact with him. May Allah put his mercy upon him and forgive his soul.

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