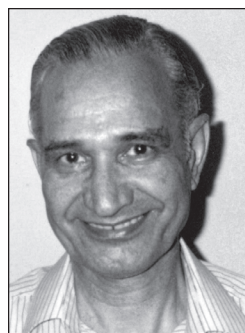


Krishan Kumar Malhotra

(13 January 1931–7 March 2016)



Krishan Kumar Malhotra was born and brought up in Mandi, which was a princely state in the mountainous region of the pre-independence province of Punjab. He studied in Vijay High School, an institution run by the ruler of Mandi. His father was in the provincial forest service.

I first met Krishan in 1946 when both of us joined Forman Christian College in Lahore to complete FSc (equivalent to class XII). Both of us were looking

forward to joining King Edward Medical College in Lahore. Krishan, a *pahari* lad from Mandi, came with a formidable reputation of being one of the top performers of the then matriculation examination. The turbulent history of 1947 dislocated him back to Mandi and Jalandhar to complete his FSc. He joined S.N. Medical College, Agra in 1949 having missed a year of studies due to the turmoil of the Partition. He completed his MBBS without a stumble. Like his career in school, his focus was on studies; and on the basis of his performance, he was admitted to the MD (Medicine) course, and obtained his degree in 1958.

He came to Delhi as a registrar (now termed senior resident) in Medicine at Safdarjung Hospital in May 1959. He shifted to his *karambhoomi*, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), in October 1960. He joined the faculty in the Department of Medicine in May 1963. I joined AIIMS in 1961 in the Department of Surgery and met him for the first time after we had parted ways in Lahore. This was the beginning of a long and productive association between Krishan and me. At that time, AIIMS was developing its superspecialty areas. The foresight of Professor K.L. Wig had seen me go to Cambridge in 1967 to observe their newly started transplant programme. Krishan was assigned in 1969 to Georgetown, Washington D.C. for training in Nephrology on a WHO fellowship.

These were difficult times to set up a new venture. However, by the time Krishan returned, AIIMS had acquired, through the then maze of import procedures, a set of four Kiel units and enough dialysis membranes. The operation theatres had shifted from the old surgical block to the new hospital building. The dialysis unit was set up in the space thus vacated in the old surgical block. Owing to limited resources, the dialysis programme was transplant-oriented.

Initiating a transplant programme required constant interaction between surgeons and renal physicians. Professor Malhotra's involvement was intense and focused. As a pioneer, Professor Malhotra picked up two technicians. He trained one in Renal Biochemistry (then done manually) and the other was trained as a dialysis technician. He designed and assembled a dialysate tank and a motor for perfusion of the Kiel boards, preparing and assembling of which required time and care. Professor Malhotra prepared the Kiel boards and the membranes for dialysis himself, until the technician had been trained satisfactorily.

The first haemodialysis using Kiel boards was done in 1970. With a modest beginning and by 'dirtying his own hands', he laid the firm foundation of a growing dialysis and transplant programme. When Cardiology and Neurosciences moved to their own centres, enough space was available for a dialysis unit on the fourth floor, and for post-transplant barrier nursing on the seventh floor of the

main hospital block. Professor Malhotra, however, never lost his interest in 'General Medicine'. His position until his retirement from AIIMS was a Professor of Medicine and Head of the Renal Division.

He was a prolific researcher and had over a hundred publications. He established the association between chronic kidney disease and tuberculosis. He was invited to several international meetings and wrote chapters in several books. For his outstanding work in Nephrology he received several awards including the national Dr B.C. Roy Award. The Indian Council of Medical Research bestowed on him the P.V. Cherman Memorial Award for research in kidney diseases. His contribution to Nephrology was recognized by his election as President of the Indian Society of Nephrology for two years (1978 and 1979). He was an adviser in Nephrology to the postgraduate institutes in Lucknow, Srinagar and Patna.

He was a convener for Nephrology programmes of the National Board of Examinations (NBE) and organized educational programmes in Nephrology on behalf of the Association of Physicians of India and the National Academy of Medical Sciences. It is a testimony to his efforts that most of the senior nephrologists in Delhi and many in India have been trained at AIIMS.

Professor Malhotra retired from AIIMS in 1989. He then joined the College of Medicine and Medical Sciences in King Fahd University, Dammam in Saudi Arabia, as Professor of Nephrology and Medicine. He returned in 1996 to establish the Nephrology department at the Pushpawati Singhanian Hospital in Delhi. The hospital started with a modest set of four machines and now does about 1500 dialysis, and 6–8 renal transplants per month. The department was accredited by the NBE in 2004. Professor Malhotra also headed the research committee of this institution.

Professor Malhotra married Manju and had two children. Arun, the elder one lives in Mumbai. His sister Ritu, is a trained dentist. Manju Malhotra had been unwell for the past 10 years. She had brain haemorrhage 10 years ago, and this with her polyarthritis severely restricted her mobility and left her confined to her home. She passed away on 23 April 2015.

After Manju's passing away, Professor Malhotra spent his time between Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai. He was diagnosed with Parkinson disease about a year and half ago. He came to see me about 3 months before he passed away, for a venous ulcer in his leg. He was depressed by the disability caused by Parkinson disease and he was moving to Bengaluru to be with his daughter. From Bengaluru he travelled to Arun in Mumbai. The end came on 7 March 2016, when he had an upper gastrointestinal bleed from a peptic ulcer. The bleeding was accompanied by aspiration of blood into the trachea.

Krishan was a person with good human values. He was soft-spoken and dedicated to his work. His firm conviction was a driving force in developing one of the finest nephrology units in India. He imparted human values to those around him. As a tribute, I have this to say to him: 'Dear Krishan, your journey through life has been long and purposeful. All along your actions have greatly benefited society. You will be missed by your family. Your friends and your patients will miss you too. Rest in peace.'

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