

# A community amongst hundreds needs desperate access to modern health care

26<sup>th</sup> October 2016

1000 Am, Sylhet, Bangladesh.

I started my journey to visit one my patient whom I treated in 1998 just after my internship, he had heart attack and I was just only following him up post hospital discharge. All I did was to adjust his heart failure medications and he got well. I followed him up intermittently on my visit to Bangladesh. All this years he was doing so well and was able to continue his agriculture work .

In March 2016 he started to fell weak, abdominal pain and became pale, evaluations revealed he has severe anaemia, an endoscopy and biopsy confirmed adenocarcinoma of the antral part of the stomach. He had surgery.

His struggle begins.

Due to lack of counselling and poor infrastructure he had only 1 cycle of chemotherapy and stopped the treatments. As usual he became unwell and had infections post chemotherapy. There was no scope to get him counselling and support to convince that it is very common to have side effects from chemotherapy and all one needs is to keep him/her under constant supervision to combat the effects of the intense treatments.

Family and the patient decided to pursue the complementary medicine and they felt he is getting better, who knows it is likely he was recovering from the chemo effects and needed further chemo cycles.

Within 2 months his condition started to deteriorate and developed signs and symptoms of advancing disease such as pain and abdominal distension, vomiting and malena.

On my visit to Bangladesh I went to see him as my sister accompanied.

A sad story a sad ending is coming to the family but what is so upsetting is to see him suffering with no supportive care during the time he needs it so desperately.

Seeing his Pain and distress made me so helpless and frustrated. He was asking me to give him some sort of allopathic medicine which will make him well or get a bit of relief at least.

On my return to town I sent him some palliative dose of steroid to make him a bit better; family has been counselled for the worse.

Lack of expert counsellors and co ordinated systems is responsible for loss of lives, pain and sufferings of human lives in 21<sup>st</sup> century modern world when access to modern media and technology are so prevalent amongst even for the day labourer.

We need a unique system where we all can have the same access to affordable modern care where ever we live in this planet.

Affordable care with compassion affordable care for all is the only solution.

Dr Amin Islam, 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016, London, United Kingdom.