



*Dear Colleague*

## what's new at braemar?

A leading neurosurgeon has joined Braemar's team. He says New Zealand offers exciting opportunities in his field of work, but it also means his family can enjoy the lifestyle they love.



Zakier Hussain was working at one of Britain's neurosurgical centres when he saw a position advertised at Waikato Hospital's new neurosurgery unit.

While Zakier did not know much about New Zealand, he was excited by the idea of working in a new neurosurgical centre. "It appeals to your imagination. There are so many possibilities," he said.

He and his wife and their young daughter visited the country in June 2006, liked what they saw

and in September that year, Zakier took up his position as one of three neurosurgeons at Waikato Hospital.

He is now extending his work to private practice at Braemar Hospital where he specialises in a range of cranial and spinal surgery and peripheral nerve and muscle procedures.

He says while the work at Braemar is different to his work in the public sector, it is equally rewarding.

“ Saving lives and alleviating pain is hugely satisfying. ”

At Braemar he plans to treat a range of conditions including cranial disorders (scalp or skull tumours, tumours of the brain and its coverings, Chiari malformation (congenital structural defects during development of the

brain that causes headaches and affects balance), management of degenerative spinal conditions and pain management such as trigeminal neuralgia (facial pain which is episodic and electric shock-like), and spinal pain especially from osteoporotic spinal fractures or pain due to cancer involvement of the spine such as multiple myeloma or metastasis.

Much of the work is related to cervical, thoracic and lumbar disc disease. Zakier says patients with disc disease can suffer neck, shoulder, arm, back and leg pain which can be debilitating and prevent them from carrying out normal activities.

Back pain is one of the most common maladies, with around 80 per cent of people experiencing it in their lifetime. As people get older their bones thin and bone strength decreases. By the age of 35, around 30 per cent of people will show evidence of disc degeneration at one or more levels and by the age of 60, more than nine out of 10 people will show the same degeneration.

In the past surgical procedures were quite extensive. Today, with

improvements in technology and devices, the same treatment can be carried out through minimally invasive techniques that involve injecting bone cement into the spine through small incisions, stabilising the spine. The procedure strengthens the weakened vertebra and patients can generally go back to daily living early, usually with no or minimal restrictions. "When the pain goes, patients can get back to their normal lives."

Zakier completed his early medical studies in India at Stanley Medical College & Chennai Medical College in Chennai before going to Britain with his wife Haseena, also a doctor, who now practises as a GP at Hamilton East Medical Centre. He completed his MSc in Endovascular Neurosurgery (Interventional Neuroradiology) at Oxford University. The university is considered a world leader in the field.

He worked at Hurstwood Park Neurological Centre in West Sussex during his last two years in Britain, regarded as a centre of excellence.

He says he sees New Zealand as a country in which he can pursue his career at the highest level but also enjoy a balance of life, which

His work, he says, is very rewarding. "Saving lives and alleviating pain is hugely satisfying."

Braemar chief executive Paul Bennett says the hospital is delighted that Zakier has joined the team. "To attract a surgeon of Zakier's skill and experience to

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includes one of his loves – outdoor photography. He and his wife now have two children, aged 13 and 2.

At Waikato Hospital, Zakier works mainly in neurosurgery and also in neuroradiology, specifically with vascular lesions of the brain.

Braemar is always very pleasing" he said.

"Neurosurgery was the missing piece in the range of surgical services offered at Braemar and I am extremely pleased that we can now offer this to referring GPs and their patients."

**Braemar Hospital accepts all medical health insurance policies including Southern Cross, Sovereign and Tower.**

## why choose a braemar hospital?

### “Choice and Flexibility

**An ageing population, increasing demands and expectations, and the cost of new technologies provide challenges for both the private and public health sectors.**

Medical and technological advancements have increased our ability to treat disease and injury. This has led to a greater expectation as to what should be achieved by the health sector. In the public sector the increase in complex surgery has come at the expense of lower cost surgery such as hernias and varicose veins, and the rationing system of waiting lists has led to these, and more complex procedures, being completed in the private sector.

Private healthcare offers choice and flexibility. It also offers access to some of the best Specialists in a timely manner without the restrictions of a waiting list.

At Braemar patients can be assured of a quality service at competitive rates and the very latest of modern medical technology.

Visit our website for more details: [www.braemarhospital.co.nz](http://www.braemarhospital.co.nz)



Pat Bary  
Chairman

“Quality care costs less  
at Braemar hospitals

[www.braemarhospital.co.nz](http://www.braemarhospital.co.nz)



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