



## Braemar urologist Shiva Nair is outstanding in his field, but his focus is always on equitability of health outcomes and achieving the best results for the most vulnerable...

Shiva Nair's CV gives some insight into his motivation and work ethic. Degrees in medicine and surgery, a doctorate in pharmacology, a list as long as your arm of publications in prestigious journals, and academic and leadership awards, beginning as far back as 1999 when he was named Most Outstanding Student at his college in Suva, Fiji.

The impression is of a man intent on achieving excellence in all his fields of endeavour, which he is. But there is more to it than that. The practice of medicine is not purely technical. It involves a relationship between a person who is seeking help, and who may be vulnerable, and a person who has the skills, knowledge, and power to help. The core of Shiva's motivation is to get better outcomes for the most vulnerable in society.

"As a society, we are only as strong as our weakest link. As medical practitioners, we are responsible for all mankind. We have a responsibility to bring about changes for those who cannot do that for themselves. So our focus needs to be on those groups which are underperforming in health outcomes."

In New Zealand, he says, that means the delivery of healthcare and equity in achieving similar health outcomes for all sociodemographic groups. "They should be similar because we are all in the same health system." Currently, in the field of urology, Maori and Pacific Island mortality rates for prostate cancer and bladder cancer are higher than for non-Maori, and these groups have higher rates of complications arising from kidney stones, due to metabolic syndrome relating to diet, weight etc. Patients may not present until the condition has become serious and complex. "That may be because some groups are more resilient to pain or because of fear of taking time off work, lack of money or transport. A change to a healthier lifestyle may be difficult when your routine revolves around home and work, possibly even double shifts, just to keep ahead of the bills."

He says changes in approach to inequality should include understanding what is appropriate for the populations that are targeted. "I might sit in my office and say, 'I recommend A, B and C. But the patient's perspective might be completely different. We need to engage each group and see what they perceive as their solutions to

these problems and how we can support them.”

His focus on achieving equitable results extends to the Pacific Islands, including his birthplace, Fiji, where he is involved in mentoring and training programmes aimed at achieving sustainable services. Pacific Island doctors are brought to New Zealand to train and New Zealand doctors do placements in the Islands to mentor and pass on their skills.

Shiva was drawn to urology after completing his rotations through different specialities and medicine. He liked the personalities involved and the simple nature of fixing problems. Like other urologists he likens his work to that of a plumber. “If a kidney is blocked, we unblock it. If your prostate is enlarged like a washer on a tap, you repair the washer and it works.”

During his training, he played with other ideas. Midway through his medical degree he completed a PhD on the effect of melatonin on stroke victims, but the thought of doing research without clinical practise did not appeal. He also joined the New Zealand Territorial Force and considered remaining as an Army medic. He was actively involved in student politics – at least four MPs were his contemporaries at university – but he never wanted to pursue it. “I don’t think I could sell my soul over policies with which I didn’t agree.

From 2018-2020, he completed a two-year fellowship in uro-oncology with a focus on prostate and bladder cancer in Canada.

At Braemar, his work will encompass all urological procedures, including laser prostatectomies and Urolift, in which tiny implants hold open the obstructed pathway that blocks the urine flow, preserving the sexual function for men who have benign enlarged prostates. The latter is a new procedure in the Waikato.

He is currently the Clinical Director for the Urology Department at Waikato DHB and the training supervisor for the hospital’s urology registrars. He runs a training session at 6.30am on Fridays, which GPs can join.

There isn’t much spare time, but he enjoys spending it with his wife, a pharmacist, and his two sons aged eight and nine.



Dr Greg Spark – Deputy Chairman



## DR. SHIVA NAIR

### QUALIFICATIONS

- MBChB
- PhD
- FRACS (Urology)

### ROOMS AT:

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### AREAS OF SPECIALISATION

- Prostate Cancer Management – *Diagnosis and Surgical management including nerve sparing radical prostatectomy*
- Urological Oncology
- Laser Prostate Surgery
- Laparoscopic Renal Surgery

- Urinary stone treatment- Endoscopic laser treatment and Lithotripsy
- Vasectomy and Vasectomy Reversal
- Scrotal Surgery
- Male infertility and Impotency
- General Urology
- Cystoscopy
- Prostate Biopsy

### SPECIALIST TRAINING

- Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

### POSITIONS & MEMBERSHIPS

- Fellow of Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (Urology)
- Society of Uro-Oncology Fellowship
- Consultant Urologist – Waikato Public Hospital
- Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
- Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand
- American Urology Association