

**Editorial****Cardiology For The Rich?**

No other field in modern medicine is perhaps as labour intensive as well as capital intensive as Cardiology. Also, no other field of medicine is anywhere as innovative and as rapidly evolving as Cardiology. To top this Hi-Tech explosion is the fact that for developing countries like Pakistan everything from drugs and other consumables to hard-ware to expertise is imported. As if this was not enough of a disadvantage, the devaluation of currency and the galloping inflation is taking even the basic necessities out of the reach of the common man. Couple this to declining government spending on health in dollar equivalent and the increasing incidence of heart disease and you can clearly picture what Pakistan is moving towards.

The problems are defined enough and to an extent known to all and sundry. People in various positions have made efforts to work out their own particular solutions. With the present day catch phrase being the reality of market economy, the private sector is taking off in a big way. Local bodies and NGO's are trying to fill in small gaps and the big government health sector is under severe strains. Small areas or organizations with aggressive campaigning and having persons with extraordinary commitment are able to fend well but end up robbing another essential area of its needs. The pie being small, it can be cut up only in so many ways. The end result seems to be the same always.

But there has to be a solution. Even if there is none, one has to be worked out. What is very clear is that a solution to this problem cannot be what is being meted out in the developed countries. Pakistan has to face facts. Hard decisions have to be under-taken and tough choices made. What has to be done must be done. But this has to be done by evolving consensus. And this must be done voluntarily and must begin locally.

If we fail to solve our problem and evolve a cardiology and priorities best suited to us, then some one else will impose it on us or even worse : chaos will reign. I still have hope.

**Azhar Faruqi***Editor*