

Future Star: Tanzim Khan, DPM

This podiatrist strives to
save limbs and lives.

BY MARC HASPEL, DPM



In a profession like podiatric medicine, publishing research can never be understated. Advancing this field in the eyes of other established medical academic institutions certainly depends on the promulgation of studies, research, and publishing. New findings eventually manage to filter down to those practitioners on the front line of patient care, thereby raising the bar of excellence in practice for everyone involved. One such doctor leading the way in such academic pursuits is the next podiatrist, Tanzim Khan, DPM, in *Podiatry Management's* series on Future Stars in Podiatric Medicine. Nominated by a venerable leader in podiatric study, David Armstrong, DPM, Dr. Khan is already an assistant professor of surgery at Keck Medicine of USC.

Dr. Khan just finished dual fellowships in limb preservation and has been anchoring the newly created limb preservation team at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center in Los Angeles, the first-ever podiatric surgeon to do so. All the while, at the same time, he has been working on a dozen publications. Dr. Khan recently took a few moments from his busy schedule to discuss his young career and his outlook on the future.

PM: Who in podiatric medicine has influenced you the most thus far in your career? To whom else do you give thanks?

Khan: One of the most influential podiatrists in my personal career would be my co-resident, Ilya Shnitser. His dedication, compassion, and camaraderie were contagious. Together, we were able to push each other and grow both professionally and as friends.

I would like to give thanks to Dr. David Armstrong, Dr. Laura Shin, Dr. Yuri Rotshteyn, and Dr. Arthur Passik.

complications such as major limb amputations.

PM: What are your goals, both short-term and long-term, for your podiatric career?

Khan: My current short-term goals are to establish a diabetic foot center of excellence at Rancho Los

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They have all taught me invaluable lessons, and have help shaped me into the doctor that I am today.

PM: What first attracted you to a career in podiatric medicine?

Khan: I believe that the beauty of podiatry is that it is a mix of several different specialties—orthopedics, plastic surgery, dermatology, radiology, and physical medicine. Podiatric physicians treat an anatomically unique area of the body that requires sound knowledge of anatomy and biomechanics. They have an ability to allow people to return back to their activities, improve their quality of life, and also prevent life altering

Amigos Rehabilitation Center with a primary focus on surgical management for prophylactic and curative procedures to address altered biomechanics due to diabetes.

My long-term goal would be to have these centers of excellence spread throughout the country and shift the focus from wound care to surgically addressing the etiologies of wounds. I also hope to continue to be an educator and contribute to advances in podiatric medicine.

PM: What College of Podiatric Medicine did you attend? Where was and how would you describe your post-graduate training?

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Khan: I attended the New York College of Podiatric Medicine. I completed my residency at Coney Island Hospital in Brooklyn, New York. Coney Island provides its residents a very hands-on experience for those who are motivated and willing to take advantage

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of the opportunities set before them. Training in a city hospital comes with the autonomy that allows one to develop a plan, execute, and follow patients longitudinally. This provides confidence and critical thinking for the obstacles to be faced throughout one’s career.

PM: What are your thoughts about APMA, the certifying boards, and other organizations that function within the profession?

Khan: I appreciate their efforts in establishing a standard and their work in lobbying for this profession. This will be very important in today’s landscape, where COVID-19 has impacted podiatrists as it has their allopathic and osteopathic colleagues.

PM: What sub-specialties interest you in podiatric medicine, and why?

Khan: The sub-specialty I am most interested in is limb salvage. I enjoy and focus on this part of podiatric medicine due to the complex decision-making and uniqueness of every case. The ability to save a limb, and often one’s life, is what makes the sub-specialty quite rewarding.

PM: What type of practice arrangement, i.e., solo, small, or large group, suits you the best?

Khan: The ideal practice arrangement for me is my current situation, which is a hospital-based practice. This allows me to focus on providing the best care to my patients without having to worry as much about the business aspect of medicine.

PM: What are your thoughts on the overall role of podiatric medicine in the current healthcare system?

Khan: Many academic centers and hospital systems are implementing podiatric physicians into their facilities as they see the impact of the services those physicians provide. Podiatric physicians have made strides; however, they need to continue demonstrating what they have to offer and why they should be essential to every hospital system.

PM: What should this profession do to continue to attract sound quality individuals like yourself?

Khan: This profession needs to continue implementing itself as an essential component of the healthcare system, especially in hospital-based systems and academic centers. By demonstrating the abilities of its practitioners and showing the difference they can make, I am sure the profession will garner the attentions of those who are compassionate and motivated.

PM: Would you be in favor of a degree change as well as name change from the term “podiatric” to “foot and ankle” medicine?

Khan: I am indifferent to a degree change. I am in favor, however, of a full, universal scope where providers do procedures in which they are both comfortable and competent. **PM**



Dr. Haspel is senior editor of this magazine and past-president of the New Jersey Podiatric Medical Society. He is a member of the American Academy of Podiatric Practice Management.