

**AGENDA ITEM 1.8  
OBITUARY**

**DR KUSH SHRESTHA  
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEON  
22 NOVEMBER 1972 – 11 SEPTEMBER 2021**

Kush was born in Kathmandu, Nepal, where he spent his childhood before being awarded a prestigious scholarship from the Australian Government to study medicine at the University of Adelaide. This was an opportunity only provided to the most promising students across the Commonwealth of Nations. He subsequently married Sophie, whom he met at university, and then moved to the United Kingdom. There he spent a couple of years at Burnley General Hospital and the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. Upon returning to Adelaide, he worked as a non-accredited orthopaedic registrar before being accepted into the South Australian Orthopaedic Training Program. During this period he was nominated as an APOA young ambassador during the 2004 Triennial Conference held in Kuala Lumpur.

After completing his training, Kush was accepted for a 12-month lower limb arthroplasty fellowship in London, Ontario, under Professor Steve McDonald. While there he co-authored a chapter with Professor McDonald in *Master Techniques in Orthopaedic Surgery – The Hip*. This was followed by a sports fellowship at the Fowler Kennedy sports medicine clinic, focussing primarily on the shoulder and knee.

On his return to Australia he joined the Royal Darwin Hospital.

He was head of the Orthopaedics Department for a period of time, as well as the director of orthopaedic training.

He also established his own private practice with Nautilus Orthopaedics at the Darwin Private Hospital. He became busy very quickly.

Kush had great ambitions for the Royal Darwin Hospital Orthopaedic department. This was demonstrated through his establishment of the AOA-accredited Arthroplasty and Trauma Fellowship.

He also played a vital role in the department, joining with other Australian healthcare institutions in multicentre-study collaborative work.

During all of this, he never lost sight of where he came from. He tried to channel his knowledge and expertise to assist the development of orthopaedics in Nepal. This was mainly through the AussieMed Foundation, which he set up. During the earthquake of 2015 he raised funds and acquired materials which he took to Nepal, where he actively participated in treating the large number of patients suffering from orthopaedic trauma in Kathmandu.

As part of improving orthopaedic services in Nepal, Kush established the Nepal Hip and Knee Arthroplasty Symposium. He organised from Darwin a group of orthopaedic surgeons, clinical nurses, physiotherapists and theatre nurses to accompany him to Kathmandu. This group gave lectures, participated in orthopaedic operative cases in Kathmandu's hospitals, and helped to raise the standard of orthopaedics in Nepal.

To further his engagement with the Nepalese orthopaedic services, Kush brought a number of Nepalese orthopaedic surgeons to the Royal Darwin Hospital to gain firsthand exposure to orthopaedics in a first-world setting. These surgeons returned to Nepal and have already made a significant improvement in the country's arthroplasty service provision. Establishing an orthopaedic centre of excellence in Kathmandu had always been a dream for Kush. The Nepalese government recognised his efforts towards achieving this, providing him with unfettered access to the Prime Minister of Nepal and his administration.

Although Kush was a man of many admirable qualities, the most striking were his humility and selflessness. He was always soft-spoken, and never felt the need to show who was the boss, whether this be with registrars, interns, or the nursing staff. He was always calm and respectful to others even when things got stressful in the operating theatre.

Kush became unwell over 18 months ago. It would be the reaction of many to completely withdraw and wallow in self-pity. He was the exact opposite. When asked about his health, he would assure you that he was well. He was much more interested in whether you could attend an AussieMed Foundation fundraiser or deliver an online lecture to orthopaedic registrars in Kathmandu, etc, than the state of his own health. During his last few weeks with us he was busy organising COVID-19 clinics in remote villages in Nepal. It was always about others until the end.

Kush sadly passed away at the age of 48 and is survived by his wife, Sophie, and sons, Keshav, Vikesh and Ilia. He was truly a great man who will be greatly missed.

*This Obituary was written by Dr Ahmed Bajhau FRACS*