

Oration for Dame Parveen Kumar

To be Delivered 24 July 2018, 11am by Prof Lesley Roberts

Chancellor

I am delighted to introduce as our honorary graduand this morning one of the pre-eminent physicians of her generation: DAME PARVEEN KUMAR.

Dame Parveen – a gastroenterologist – is currently Professor of Medicine and Education at Barts and The London School of Dentistry. Born in Lahore, she qualified and did her postgraduate training at Barts. For over forty years, she combined work for the NHS as consultant gastroenterologist and physician at the Homerton, Royal London and Barts hospitals with teaching and lecturing at Barts. She set up the first gastroenterology unit at the Homerton Hospital and helped to bring together all the liver services across many hospitals to improve care for patients with viral hepatitis. On the national medical scene, she was a founding non-executive director of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) in 1999; Chairman of the Medicines Commission UK, 2002-5; Vice-President of the Royal College of Physicians, 2003-5; President of the British Medical Association, 2006-7, and President of the Royal Society of Medicine, 2010-12, setting up its Global Health Initiative. She is currently Chair of the British

Medical Association's Board of Science and President of the Royal Medical Benevolent Fund.

Dame Parveen has been an outstanding leader in medical education. With her former research supervisor, Dr Mike Clarke, she founded and co-authored Kumar and Clark's *Clinical Medicine*, the indispensable textbook used for decades by medical students around the world. This iconic volume, now in its ninth edition, stems directly from her own experience as a medical student when she found the standard textbook so boring that she determined to write the definitive one. She was the first Director of Postgraduate Medical Education at Barts and set up the first MSc course in Gastroenterology in the UK. She continues to teach, lecture and examine medical students across the globe, ensuring that, in the process, she does a ward round at the local hospital, which enables her to see how medical students are taught. Her advice to students embarking on their medical careers is surely worth repeating at any degree ceremony: 'Don't be arrogant and always maintain your honesty and integrity; always say if you don't know something and own up to mistakes'.

Dame Parveen has been an important role model and advocate for women in medicine. She has worked continuously to help women up the ladder, having started her studies at Barts as one of eight women to 160 men, and been for twenty years the first and only woman on the gastroenterology team. She understands perfectly the complexities of juggling a medical career with family life. In 1999

she won the first Asian Woman of the Year Award and was President of the Medical Women's Federation in its centenary year of 2017.

Dame Parveen has won many awards and honours. In 2000, she was awarded the CBE for services to medicine. In 2007, she received the British Medical Association's Gold Medal for services to medicine and education. In 2017, she won a Lifetime Achievement Award from the British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin for her contributions to medicine, and in the same year was made a Dame Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. Her portrait hangs in London's National Portrait Gallery. Alongside these significant national roles we are honoured that Dame Parveen has been a long standing supporter, mentor and advocate for Warwick Medical School, serving on our Faculty Advisory Board during the period 2014 to 2016. She is a truly outstanding figure in the world of medicine and medical education and we are delighted to be able to honour her today.

Chancellor: in the name of the Senate, I present to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*, DAME PARVEEN KUMAR.