One place, one goal

Comprehensive care across the board

By JESSICA SIBLEY
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SENECA — When Dr. Tauqueer Alam was growing up in Bombay, India, a part of him knew his life would travel into the world of medicine.

Throughout his experiences, however, there was one all-encompassing aspect about health care that caused him great discontent.

Beyond his goal of becoming a doctor, he knew he wanted to provide his patients with something he wished he saw more of in the industry.

He wanted to bring comprehensive health care to his practice, wherever that would turn out to be, he recalls.

Luckily, Seneca was the place to which Alam decided to bring his vision.

Since the opening of Keowee Primary Care and Internal Medicine in 1996, Alam is proud of the clinic's growth.

And although the area is a great place to raise a family and make a living, he admitted, we have the cold northeast to thank for his decision to settle in the Golden Corner.

"I had numerous interviews lined up after I finished my residency in New York," he said. "I went out to start my car during the winter and when I came back inside, my hair had turned into ice. As soon as I came in, I cancelled all interviews north of the Carolinas."

Alam wanted to execute his goal in a way that would provide quality comprehensive care to everyone that walked through the door.

"I just felt like things were usually so scattered," he said. "I would be investigating an illness and have to send blood samples and labs off to a different institution. Half of the time, the results would come back on time, half the time you had to fish for it. Not to mention that patients would sometimes not go for various tests at other places simply because everyone is so busy."

And so, Alam made a point to incorporate solutions to these occurrences into his practice.

"I wanted service we could be in control of while saying good-bye to fragmented care," he added. "We try to do each test needed under one roof and keep everything as comprehensive as possible. That way, no one slips through the cracks."

Alam's lab and vascular technicians have nearly 100 years of experience between them and as of April, his practice received its COLA laboratory accreditation, falling in line with top of the line laboratory readings.

"In order to reach proficiency, labs must have an 80 percent correlation rate," he added. "When tested, our labs have continuously matched 100 percent correlation.

"A woman came in with renal failure and instead of waiting two days for the results, we had them in 15 minutes. No waiting, no anxiety, no over the phone update," he said.

And while Keowee Primary Care has been keeping patients happy and healthy, Alam saw another need in the community.

"Since the implementation of our urgent care clinic, I feel it's been a great addition to the area as well," he said. "Of course Oconee Medical Center also provides great care, but this is a better fit for smaller-scaled medical needs. Everyone wins."

In addition, Alam is anxiously awaiting the opening of the new senior living facility dubbed, Residences at Park Place in August.

"Because it is right behind us, we feel it will be a great location for all seniors who need care," he said. "I even had the idea of adding a single patient room onsite; that way, if they can't get to their place of care, their doctor can come to them."

Keowee Primary Care also has a resident dietician on staff, available every day for consults and continued care. But Alam had a bigger plan in mind.

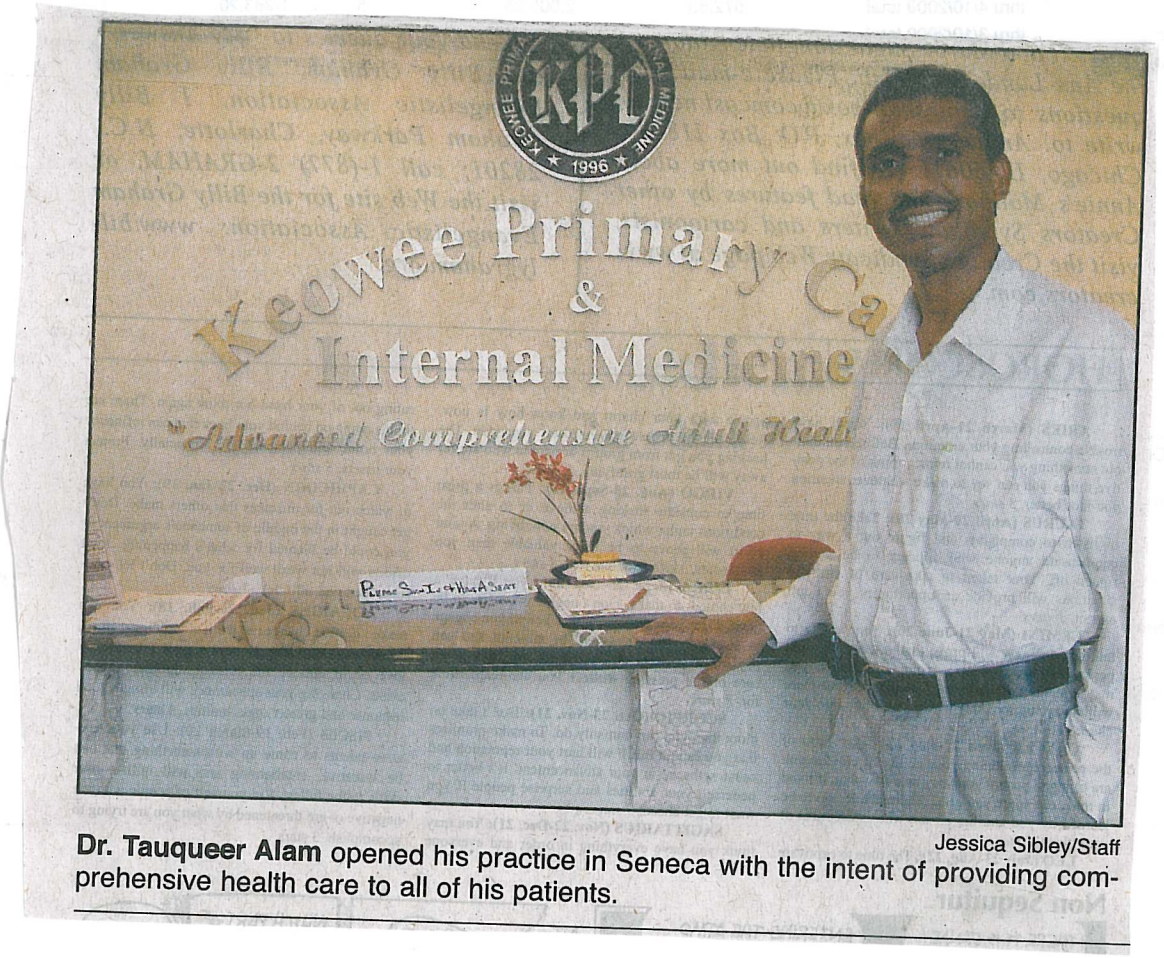
"If any tests come back that showed problems with the heart and things of this nature, I decided that our dietician's services will be of no extra cost. With the growing cost of health care, a patient is less likely to pay for the service. We want to do everything possible to get them as healthy as possible."

Lynda Maschek, resident clinical educator, even holds free community classes each Thursday of the month. Starting at 6:30 p.m. each Thursday, the community is welcome to the Keowee Primary Care lobby for some priceless education about daily health.

Topics range from the truth about artificial sweeteners to the "good" fats of life.

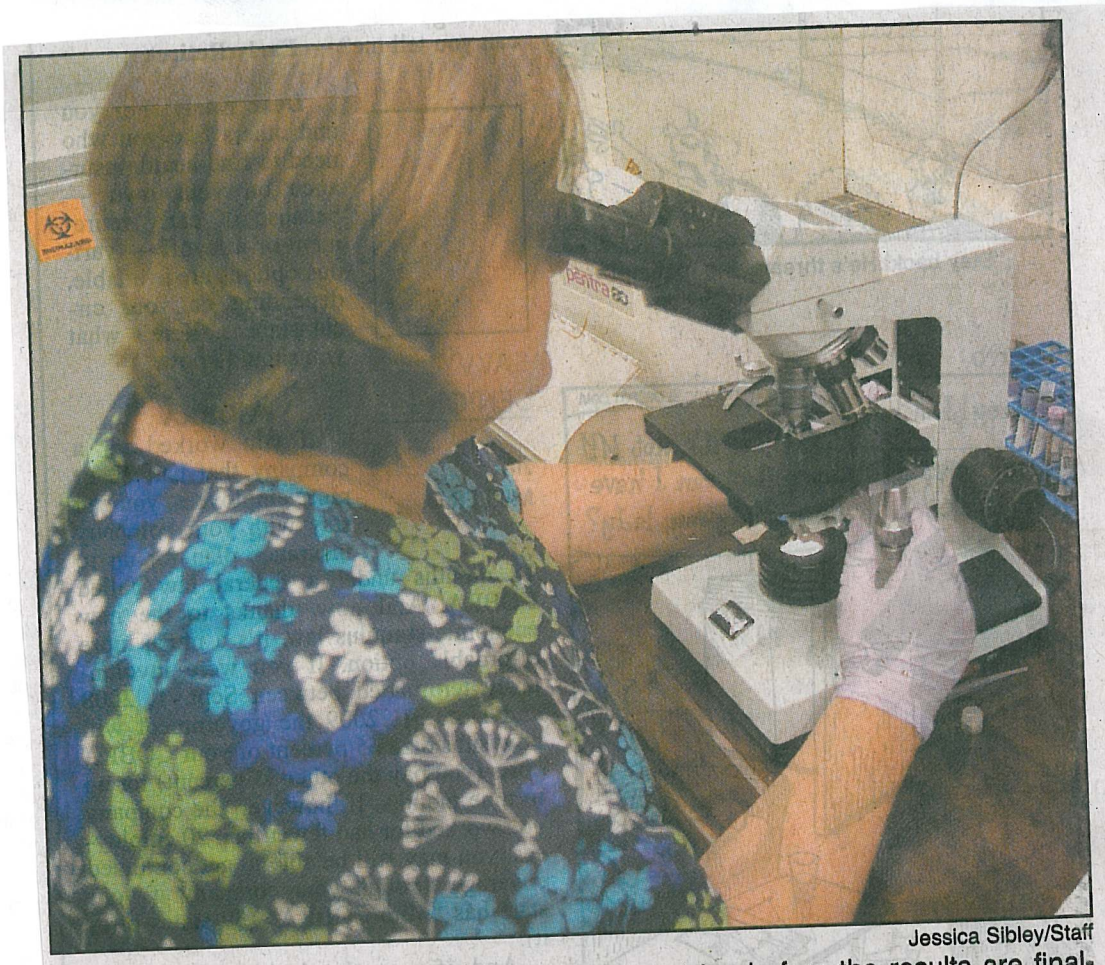
"We spare no cost for top-of-the-line technology and overall service," Alam said. "Our quality comprehensive care is exactly what we stand proudly on."

For more information, call (864) 885-0058.



Jessica Sibley/Staff

Dr. Tauqueer Alam opened his practice in Seneca with the intent of providing comprehensive health care to all of his patients.



Jessica Sibley/Staff

A blood sample is studied by a laboratory technician before the results are finalized.



Jessica Sibley/Staff

Each blood sample and lab test is labeled by a barcoding system to avoid mix-up errors. "We use top-of-the-line technology to ensure the best possible care under one roof," Alam said.