

Polio True Story—Hamid

Hamid Lahore, March 21, 2007:

Taken from TV Series Polio True Stories by SharpCut Productions

As the heavy traffic of Lahore builds up during the rush-hours of early morning, one motorcycle appears strikingly different as it weaves its way through the congested roads. Perched on the back of this motorcycle is Hamid, holding onto his crutches as his brother drives him to and from office. This has been their routine since Hamid started work at a Bank in Lahore – Hamid having his brother accompany him wherever he goes has been the routine since he was paralyzed with polio.

Hamid was born a healthy child in Pakistan's Punjab province, but at 11 months of age, he contracted polio. With the extent of his disability being so severe, Hamid could never walk or play like other children, but yet his family never let him feel as if he was any different.

Educating Hamid was the only way forward for his mother, as she was aware that already being disadvantaged, Hamid would need an education more than others to get anywhere in this life “I carried him to school, initially in my lap when he was small, but as he grew up, I would carry him to school on my back. I did all I could to make sure that he could get an education,” revealed his mother to Tauseeq Haider from SharpCut Films. “My main role in life is to support Hamid,” says his younger brother, “as since I can remember, I have only seen Hamid like this, and I will always be there to support him.”

Hamid getting to office without his brother is impossible, so day in, day out, Hamid's brother drives Hamid to work in the mornings and brings him home in the evenings. Come rain or shine, in bad health or lazy days, Hamid's brother is there to ensure that Hamid reaches work on time. “My family never made me feel as if I had a problem, and has always been there to encourage me - it is not easy for them or me.”



“When one's father dies, it is the son's right to lower him to the grave – I couldn't” Hamid explained, because of his polio disability.

The extent of Hamid's polio created disability is heart-breaking, as both of his legs are affected. “I can't imagine getting up without my crutches” 33 year old Hamid explains. “Climbing the steps to my home can be difficult, and even on a good day it takes me around 5 minutes to walk up or down the house stairs.” As well as his crutches, Hamid has always had to wear special shoes to support any movement, and only with all these aids, can Hamid make any attempt to move without help from those around him. “I never want people around him to pity him, or help Hamid because they feel sorry for him. I want to be there for him at any time he needs help, as I don't want him to ask anyone else,” states his brother.

“Even the simplest movement is difficult for him, and it breaks my heart to see him having to struggle with basic actions and movements that are so simple for his friends and peers,” states his mother as she gently sheds a tear or two.

As emotion overcomes her, Hamid's mother questions Tauseeq Haider, “why were there no polio campaigns when Hamid was a child?” In between sobs she frantically states “had there been campaigns, I would be the 1st to line up and get my child immunized against this terrible disease.” But as control comes upon her she realizes the importance of her own strength in Hamid's life, and her optimism returns.

“No child in this day and age should have to live the life and problems that Hamid does, and I make sure that all my friends and family give polio drops to their children in every campaign.” What has happened to Hamid cannot be changed, but we will always be with him to make sure that he gets as much out of life as possible. Hamid's story is just one in the series of polio true stories produced and directed by SharpCut Films.