Professor Hanif Moola
4th February 1944 - 19th December 2013

Professor Mohamed Hanif Moola, previous Dean of the Dental Faculty of the University of the Western Cape, was laid to rest on the 19th December, 2013.

Prof Moola matriculated in 1962 and, being unable to pursue a career in Dentistry in South Africa, left for India. He graduated with a BDS degree from the University of Bombay in 1970 and went to the United Kingdom where he obtained the LDS.RCS. from Queen’s University of Belfast in 1974, a DDPH (R.C.S) from the Eastman Dental Hospital in London in 1976 and an MSc from the University of London in 1981. He was in private practice in Durban in 1976 and in 1977 he joined the Faculty of Dentistry, University of the Western Cape.

He served the Faculty of Dentistry at UWC from 1977 to his retirement in 2009 in various capacities including Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Head of Department of Community Dentistry, Acting Dean and retired as Dean of the newly formed Faculty at UWC after the merger with the School of Oral Health Sciences of the University of Stellenbosch.

During his tenure at UWC, Prof Moola served in various capacities at Provincial, National and International levels. He chaired the Oral Health Committee on Policy during the tenure of Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma as Minister of Health. He was also a leading proponent of water fluoridation for South Africa. At the Faculty, during this time, he was instrumental in setting up the Faculty outreach programmes, initially at Bishop Lavis, then in Crossroads and then a fully-fledged outreach programme in Gugulethu, which still is a unique co-operative programme between the City Council of Cape Town, the Provincial Government of the Western Cape and the University of the Western Cape. This site in Gugulethu from inception has been one of the most sought-after sites for elective work by dental students from Europe, the USA and other countries.

A distinguishing characteristic of Prof Moola was his special ability to relate to and to mentor junior staff members and post-graduate students. He supervised Masters theses, in not only his own discipline, but also in Orthodontics, Paediatric Dentistry and Oral Medicine and Periodontics. He published extensively in national and international journals and was a leading supporter of the South African Division of the IADR.

Hanif Moola was involved with the Dental Faculty at UWC from its inception until his passing… a period of over 36 years and in that time he was a teacher, a colleague, a mentor and most importantly, a friend to myself and many others. He was the rock during some very turbulent moments and will always be remembered for his commitment and his dedication to the faculty.

He leaves behind his wife Zohra and his sons Ismail, a well-established physician in Johannesburg and Ahmed, a group executive with Standard Bank, also in Johannesburg. Our gratitude to the family for allowing him to be part of the Faculty over all these years. May his soul rest in peace.

Yusuf Osman