

## Editorial

---

### **Professor Chaman Lal Malhotra (1916-1991): scientist, humanist and manager *par excellence***

Prof. C. L. Malhotra was born on 11 May 1916. He was a graduate of King Edward Medical College, Lahore. The major part of his career was spent as Professor and Head of the Department of Pharmacology at Lady Hardinge Medical College (LHMC). When he joined LHMC, he discovered that the students had been without a pharmacology teacher, and that he had to finish the course in two and a half months. He took up the challenge and worked eight hours a day at home to be able to give two theory classes and a practical class every day in the college. His hard work and determination bore fruit, and the students did so well in the examination that the inspector sent by the Medical Council of India was completely satisfied. Besides teaching, Prof. Malhotra



also started research on the role of acetylcholine in the nervous system. He had the confidence and courage to send his very first research paper to the British Journal of Pharmacology where it was accepted straightaway. He continued this work on neuropharmacology and published several papers in reputed journals. During the decade 1955-65, ICMR established a unit for research on indigenous drugs under him. He made full use of the opportunity to do some good work and to upgrade the facilities in his department.

After leaving LHMC in 1971, he was Medical Commissioner of Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC). He noticed that ESIC was running with a huge deficit, primarily due to lax medical certification. Much against the advice of some more experienced persons in the organization who had given up, he implemented some simple measures which resulted in a saving of Rupees one crore in just one month. Initially he incurred the wrath of Trade Unions, but when he saw to it that the savings were ploughed back into ESIC to improve medical facilities all over India, the same Trade Unions were instrumental in getting him two years' extension after superannuation. After his retirement from ESIC, he spent a few years at Christian Medical College, Ludhiana, as Professor and Head of the Department of Pharmacology.

Dr. Malhotra was an excellent planner and got totally involved in anything he took up. However, he concealed his seriousness of purpose behind an unruffled and humorous exterior. He had the rare quality of laughing at his own mistakes, which made him very popular. His motto in life was to be humble, cooperative, helpful and accommodative, but at the same time be prepared to cross swords on vital issues. With his sad demise on April 2, 1991, we have lost a leader of Indian science, and a founder member of the Association of Physiologists and Pharmacologists of India.