

Aasim Padela, MD, MSc

Dr. Aasim Padela is the Director of the Initiative on Islam and Medicine, Associate Professor of Medicine in the Section of Emergency Medicine, and a faculty member of the MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics at the University of Chicago.

He holds an MD from Weill Cornell Medical College, completed residency in emergency medicine at the University of Rochester, and received an MSc in Healthcare Research from the University of Michigan. His Islamic studies expertise comes via a BA in Classical Arabic from the University of Rochester, seminary studies and continued tutorials with traditionally-trained Islamic authorities.

Dr. Padela is a clinician-researcher and bioethicist whose scholarship lies at the intersection of community health and religion. He utilizes diverse methodologies from health services research, religious studies, and comparative ethics to examine the encounter of Islam with contemporary biomedicine through the lives of Muslim patients and clinicians, and in the scholarly writings of Islamic authorities. Through systematic research and strategic interventions, he seeks (1) to improve American Muslim health outcomes and healthcare experiences, and (2) to construct a multidisciplinary field of Islamic bioethics.

As a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholar from 2008-2011 he developed a community-based research methodology to study and intervene upon American Muslim health disparities. In 2010, as a Visiting Fellow at the Oxford Centre of Islamic Studies he studied Islamic moral and theological frameworks, and from 2013 to 2015 as a Templeton Foundation Scholar, he led a national survey of Muslim physicians' bioethical attitudes and professional experiences. His current projects span Muslim attitudes and behaviors related to cancer screening and end-of-life care, and the intersection of science and Islamic theology and law, and are funded by the Templeton Foundation and the American Cancer Society.