



*This series provides insight into the careers of retired and actively serving physicians in occupational medicine. I am very privileged and extremely humbled to continue to meet inspiring colleagues. On this occasion I had the pleasure of talking to Dr Chris Kelly.*

**Farhan: Welcome to this interview series. Chris, please tell us about yourself.**

**Chris:** I've been married to Liz for 40 years and we have 4 children and so far, 4 grandchildren.

I have had two careers really - rural general practice and then Occupational Medicine. I graduated from Adelaide University in 1978, and completed 4 postgraduate years in Adelaide, Nth Queensland and the UK, where I did a year of obstetrics.

In between Queensland and the UK, Liz and I backpacked for a year through Southeast Asia, India, Nepal and Africa. On "a Hippie trail but *without* a head full of zombie"! A highlight was meeting Sir Edmund Hilary on the Everest base camp trek!

In rural practice I enjoyed emergency work, antenatal care and deliveries and looking after a community in an holistic sense. In my mid-40s I started Occupational Medicine. In 1996, as a trainee, I started JobFit Health Group, with Liz and one nurse.

I sat the Fellowship in 1998 and was fortunate enough to win the Ramazzini Prize and the Dean Southgate Award.

**Farhan: What developed your interest in occupational medicine?**

**Chris:** My rural practice was in Goolwa, which had an active aluminium boat building industry. I saw weld flash and foreign bodies, and my first metal fume fever.

**Farhan: What have been some of the highlights in your career?**

**Chris:** Highlights include developing Jobfit, working in the interface between medicine and business, and mentoring work I've done in Singapore and Shanghai. I've enjoyed being an examiner for many years and seeing the trainees coming through (and it keeps examiners up to date)!

**Farhan: Let's talk about your legacy. Where to from now?**

**Chris:** I hope I finish my career with a reputation as a good Doctor first and foremost.

By 2015 when I sold JobFit, it was a national business with over 400 employees from occupational physicians to admin staff.

As to the future, I've been assisting an orthopaedic surgeon for over 20 years. It's like a marriage that needs to end in divorce! I do a bit of consultancy work for JobFit. From a career point of view, it will soon be time to ride off into the sunset!

I play golf and tennis weekly and guitar badly. I made a guitar a while back and plan now to make one for each of my grandchildren.

**Farhan: Do you have a message for trainees and fellow physicians?**

**Chris:** I believe occupational physicians belong in the workplace, so I'd advise trainees to try and get themselves an onsite job. Don't just settle into the comfort and safety of your consulting room. It's way more satisfying and important for the profile of our profession to be out there relating to and interacting with workers and employers in the workplace.

Secondly, I feel it's important to realise how much social interaction, and very often self-worth, people lose when they're not at work. I would say to trainees, if you don't believe in the physical, mental and social health benefits of safe work, then you're in the wrong profession.