

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Trained in medicine across Italy and the United Kingdom, Dr. Pietro Emanuele Garbelli is a consultant physician specialized in acute internal medicine with an interest in medical leadership, bedside ultrasonography and integrative medicine. As a founder of Transforming Healthcare Ltd, he uses the wealth of knowledge and experience gained over many years to contribute toward shaping and purposefully transforming the future of healthcare.

After gaining his primary medical degree in Milan, Italy, he specialized in acute internal medicine in Florence, Italy, before moving to London, UK, where he broadened and honed his clinical skills. Over the following years, he continued to gain work experience in several hospital settings and in different medical specialties as part of a training program while gaining further local medical qualifications. After working as consultant acute physician and clinical lead for ambulatory emergency care, he successfully took on a role as clinical director for acute medicine.

Besides attending conferences, clinical and medical leadership courses tailored for the stage of his medical career, he embarked in parallel in an articulate journey of continuous self-development encompassing several disciplines, institutions, and teachers.

Growing up in a small town in Northern Italy in the late '70s, as a boy struggling to fit in an environment full of prejudices, Pietro's journey wasn't an easy one. While his close family provided a

nurturing safe environment and plenty of intellectual stimulation, as soon as he started mixing with other kids at kindergarten and in the neighborhood, he was faced with bullying and homophobic abuse.

He did not understand why some kids called him names such as “sissy,” “faggot,” “pouf,” “bent,” etc.; at this stage in his life, he did not know the meaning of those words and did not understand why they were used as emotional weapons against him. His mother, Mariagrazia, was the only person who was guiding him to face an unkind world that judged him long time before even having sexual desires or having his first sexual experience. Despite being guided how to intelligently respond to those attacks, being targeted impacted his confidence, self-esteem, and self-worth; he often felt sick and refused to continue going to kindergarten.

If that was not enough, the bullying continued in primary school, despite his schoolteacher trying to tell other children in the class to accept his “effeminate side.” Despite her meaning well, he felt even more hurt and stopped talking to anyone about what was going on in his inner world. The bullying continued in middle and high school and at the oratory summer camps, and the insults became even greater. As a result, he had very few male friends, was marginalized, and always counted on female friends to make him feel good enough and worthy.

Throughout his early years, his mental and emotional well-being were severely impacted by judgments, prejudice, and religious views on sexuality. He perceived the people around him were convinced he was a “pervert” not worthy of anything. The feelings of shame and guilt arousing from judgments of others forced him to isolate and protect himself. He would hide anything that some people would perceive as effeminate from himself and anyone who would come near him. He focused all his energy into studying and used learning to play piano and singing as an outlet to release the built-up pressure from all those violent emotions and intentions.

At sixteen, because of his lung collapsing, he was hospitalized; it is during this time that his love for medicine started. He decided, in helping others, he will be more accepted in society and redeem himself by displaying “saintly” behaviors. The way his surgeons treated him made him feel dehumanized, and all the issues he faced there inspired him further to pursue medicine so he can make a difference and bring the so-needed changes that everyone could benefit from.

Having spent all his youth in a town where he did not feel accepted, loved, and appreciated for who he was, he was drawn toward more cosmopolitan cities, intelligent open-minded people, so he welcomed with open arms the opportunity to go to university in Milan.

By then, it was clear to Pietro that trying to suffocate an important part of him not only did not work, but also, it was toxic; “praying the gay away” or living in denial only exacerbated feelings of worthlessness, loneliness, and despair. Back then, there were no positive role models about being homosexual; he grew up at the time of the AIDS crisis, and the only examples of gay people in the media were either those made fun of in movies and TV shows or those dying alone and rejected by their families. Nevertheless, logic, intuition, and a strong survival instinct guided him as he could no longer believe there was no other way; he started to search for people who were going through the same.

At some point, in Duomo Square in Milan, he summoned the courage to go to a newsagent and pick up a magazine to understand his feelings and learn more about being gay in non-shameful, nonjudgmental, and more accepting ways. He learned there was a gay book library, a gay association, a community of progressive people, gay bars, etc. He started to quench his thirst of nineteen years of suffering, isolation, and shame. His concern about the well-being of other gay people made him join gay activism against homophobia and bullying.

He got a master's degree in medicine and surgery, Summa cum Laude, at the University of Milan, discussing a dissertation on heart rate variability.

Having witnessed how nepotism, servility, and corruption heavily impacted upon doctors' careers and the running of healthcare, he preferred to make uncomfortable choices rather than getting involved in any of that. Having found no opportunities to get into specialty training near home, he moved to Florence for his specialty studies. He specialized in acute internal medicine at the University of Florence with an MSc dissertation on pulmonary embolism.

Perceiving no fair career opportunities in his home country and wanting to avoid becoming as frustrated as many colleagues he had met during his studies, he started looking for alternative paths. After a period of research and reflection, he chose to relocate to London, UK, and pursue a career in acute medicine.

He started familiarizing with the new work environment with an honorary contract as clinical and research fellow while joining the Society for Acute Medicine and continuing his medical studies, attaining Collegiate Membership of the Royal College of Physicians.

A solid "old-fashioned" academic foundation combined with ambition and a caring attitude toward patients and fellow healthcare workers worked as fuel for his subsequent career.

He joined the acute medicine training program as an opportunity to gain an extensive work experience in different hospital settings and several clinical specialties, completed the Specialty Certificate Examination in acute medicine and progressed in the medical career from junior registrar up to consultant and clinical director.

His personal journey overcoming cultural and religious prejudice forged an inquisitive mind always questioning the status quo and unwilling to being subdued. To overcome his emotional battles made him seek ways to learn, grow, and find solutions to the causes of pain and suffering.

Combining his Italian directness, humor, and warmth with attention to detail, drive for quality, and desire to help others and solve problems, Dr. Pietro did not hold back joining or launching working groups and initiatives for patient safety, quality improvement, and service development. Having a broad range of experience in different settings also helps him notice and question details that others become blind to because of habit and familiarity.

Having experienced great mentors and teachers, his desire to contribute to supporting and mentoring younger doctors grew him into an educator who initiated and delivered teaching initiatives in bedside ultrasonography.

A keen and open-minded learner, he continues to broaden his skill set in the conventional medical field, attending courses, conferences, congresses and keeping up to date with the relevant literature. His quest in finding solutions for patients' and personal health challenges and to promote and restore comprehensive health and well-being brought him to also explore other disciplines.

He experienced the benefits of complementary and integrative methods, such as osteopathy, ayurveda, acupuncture, herbal medicine, biodynamic therapy, etc. His interest in nutrition, health promotion, and healthy aging brought him to attend several conferences of integrative medicine and professional courses in functional medicine, which have also provided him with opportunities to visit international hospitals and health centers.

His spiritual journey includes qualifying as accredited BAHA Healer at the School of Intuition and Healing, training in Neo-Tantra, practicing yoga and meditation. His personal development journey included training with Landmark Education.

He joined the European Institute of Innovation and Technology – Health KIC Advanced Management Programme on Health Innovation run by Imperial College London, IESE Business School, and Copenhagen Business School to learn from and connect with innovators who share a similar call for healthcare

improvement. He welcomed the opportunity to learn about other countries' healthcare systems, visit innovative hospitals, health tech companies and start-ups, and network with like-minded individuals.

Over the last six years, he has embarked on a profound journey of self-reflection, learning, and transformation with world-renowned human behavior, cognition, and emotional intelligence expert Tony J. Selimi to bring clarity of intention in his life, maximize his human potential, and use all his wisdom to empower other doctors and Purposefully Transforming Healthcare®.

Besides providing clinical care as acute physician, clinical and educational supervision to doctors in training as consultant and medical leadership as clinical director, he founded Transforming Healthcare Ltd with a vision to contribute toward assisting doctors and everyone involved in healthcare to create sustainable solutions for thriving environments.

His mission is realized through publishing books, writing articles, delivering talks, interviews, consultations, training, and partnering with and influencing world leaders, healthcare stakeholders, and policymakers.

He believes that health is priceless, and therefore, healthcare is always worthy of investing in. He believes that everyone is worthy of love and of full expression of their human potential. Dr. Pietro knows that doctors and everyone else in healthcare benefit from having a nurturing environment to provide high-quality care consistently. He loves to create innovative solutions that relieve frustrations currently affecting patients and healthcare providers. He has an unshakeable trust that doctors, healthcare providers, and healthcare stakeholders can develop mutually beneficial relationships based on clear aligned goals. He trusts how Purposefully Transforming Healthcare® can reawaken lost enthusiasm and love for the medical profession.

In transforming beliefs that create prejudice, lack of dialogue, and lack of resources, funding can be made available to providing scientific evidence for the benefit of complementary healing

modalities to be integrated into modern medicine. It is what can shift us from the current medical paradigm which treats the symptoms and the effects of some illness by interfering with the mechanisms of disease toward an innovative way of addressing the root causes of disease.

His research articles appeared on the *American Journal of Medicine*, *Circulation*, and *BMJ Quality Improvement Reports*. He spoke at the Mediterranean Emergency Medicine Congress and the Care Bundles Conference. The achievements of the Ambulatory Emergency Care Unit appeared in the *Ambulatory Emergency Care Network Newsletter*. His contribution to gay activism included speaking about bullying and homophobia in high schools in Italy, holding workshops at neo-Tantra festivals, and liaising with sexual health services stakeholders.

Dr. Pietro's wide-ranging experience gives him a broader understanding of the challenges that medicine as a profession and an industry faces. His vision and mission are to be the beacon of light for other doctors to work in partnership and in synergy with decision-makers to purposefully transform healthcare, creating a thriving environment, providing high-quality care. He leaves colleagues feeling heard, empowered, and inspired to be part of a valued profession.