

Editorial

SELECTION OF MEDICAL SCHOOL/ROLE OF PAKISTAN MEDICAL AND DENTAL COUNCIL

Medical Profession is highly respected and paying in the whole world, in civilized as well as developing countries.

A large number of students are desirous of getting admission in medical schools, especially public medical colleges.

In Punjab Pakistan, (largest province) around 47000 students appeared in entry test for admission in medical schools of province against only 3500 seats.

There is around 2000 seats of private medical colleges in Punjab, for which candidate/students have to pay around 700000-800000 per year.

Students who do not get admission in these schools go abroad especially to china, Russia, Cuba, Afghanistan, Turkistan, Ukraine etc. In these countries medium of education is other than English however some schools use English for teaching their foreign students.

No doubt public sector schools have reasonably good faculty, very well equipped hospitals, good number of patients and large space for extracurricular activities.

Private Medical schools in the country have wide range of dissimilarities as for as above mentioned facilities are concerned. Only few medical schools have facilities compareable to the public sector. Some have very attractive buildings for academic blocks but most of these schools lack good hospitals for clinical training of their students. Some lacks hostel facilities and only a few have good extracurricular activities.

As for as education of above mentioned foreign medical schools is concerned, their main problem is language. Not only medium of education is important, language of patients is also of concern.

These foreign graduates, when come to Pakistan, they now have to sit in examination (NEB examination) being conducted by Pakistan Medical & Dental council. Recent results of all steps of NEB examination shows discouraging results of these foreign graduates. Personal observations (may be biased) by clinical examiners shows, lacking of clinical skills, communication skills, terminology and attitude problems with these candidates.

PMDC is the monitoring and regularity body for medical education in Pakistan. PMDC has set guidelines and minimum standards for establishing medical schools in Pakistan. However, PMDC do not have any access to above mentioned foreign countries schools and only way to allow these graduates to do practice of medicine in country is to assess them through transparent and authentic examination system.

New PMDC council, has taken right step in right direction by conducting this examination in transparent manner, however it needs further improvement.

PMDC is also tightening its monitoring role by inspections of various recognized medical colleges, which should be continued for the betterment of colleges, Medical students and ultimately, for people of Pakistan which is the main beneficiary/affectee of these policies.

There is acute shortage of faculty in all public and private Medical Colleges especially in basic sciences.

Private Medical Colleges attract the Medical teachers by offering lucrative incentives and due to this there is rapid shift of teaching faculty towards private Medical schools.

Shortage of teaching faculty is being further affected by their employment in middle east countries especially in Saudi Arabia. This is high time to set or define new goals and targets by PMDC.

As per PMDC rules and guidelines, this is being increasingly difficult rather impossible for both public & private medical colleges to recruit and then retain the faculty members due to their shortage in whole country.

This can be only possible by limiting the number of medical schools or banning their employment abroad or increasing the number of post graduates in the country. All these tasks are difficult rather impossible for the time being. Another measure PMDC can do is to redefine the faculty requirement by medical schools in the country.

In our institute UMDC, a survey was conducted two years back in which we calculated the contact hours of teachers in our medical school. On the basis of this survey, we can safely say that actual required number of teachers for effective teaching of students is quite less as compared to the requirement laid down by PMDC.

PMDC should constitute a committee of senior faculty members of both public & private colleges to redefine or reevaluate the requirement of effective teaching faculty for Medical schools keeping in mind ground realities.

By this the actual and mandatory requirement / shortage of faculty in these schools may be defined and then strict compliance regarding the faculty may be expected otherwise it will remain a dream.

Well equipped hospitals is usually shown by every private medical college, however in rare examples, these hospitals have good occupancy rate. This is because of charges of these private hospitals with no free treatment facilities as required as PMDC (in papers free treatment figures being fakely documented).

If these private hospitals actually provide the defined/required free of charge treatment, then it will be beneficial not only to medical students but this will also be big contribution for poor and deserving patients who can't afford.

PMDC can rate these colleges in different categories on the basis of these facts and not only provision of MRI/CT scan and other few. This rating then obviously will be helpful not only for PMDC/HEC but to the general public for selection of medical schools in getting admission in these schools.

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