

## INDIAN EFFORTS TO TRAIN THE TEACHERS IN HEALTH SECTOR EDUCATION

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### Abstract -

Abundance of universities and health colleges in India has ensured a vast increase in teachers in health sector. But the increased quantity does not mean an increased quality.

Although recent advances have been incorporated in health sector textbooks, newer methods of training the teacher have been lagging behind.

Of late, reforms in this arena promise a silver lining to the cloud. This article takes a stroll of the current Indian efforts to train the teachers in health sector education, so that we can meet the quality as well as quantity of such faculty; which is truly the need of the hour.

**Key words** - Medical Education, Health Sector, Faculty development program.

India can boast of the largest health sector education system in today's world. Each year millions of health care professionals graduate from diverse training centres across this nation. To train such a large workforce, needs trained trainers. Although the quantity of such trainers is available, what lacks is the quality.<sup>[1]</sup> Hence it is pertinent to understand, where we stand today and plan where we want to go, so that best can be achieved for this nation as a whole.

### The Past

India has undergone tremendous change in the recent decades and has welcomed scientific innovations in health sector with open arms. But the proportionate increase in quality of teachers in this sector has woefully lagged behind.<sup>[2,3]</sup> Hence, the stable balance between the supply and need of health care professionals and teachers of such professionals has been adversely affected.<sup>[4]</sup>

Ease of accessibility and availability of materials of daily needs, have made urban areas appealing to the teachers in health sector education.<sup>[4]</sup> Systematic training of the teachers in health sector education was not being seriously considered until now.

But recent amendments and suggestions by the Medical Council of India and other Health Regulatory Departments have now made it mandatory that such faculties be officially trained in this respect.

Pioneers of such programmes in India<sup>[1]</sup>; have calculated that around 3-5 workshops are needed per year in every health course teaching institute. Furthermore, supposing that such institutes are desirous of inculcating modern educational trends in education, this number has to increase further.

Such training programs<sup>[1]</sup> have a short term view of elevating the quality of teachers and the ultimate long term view is to identify and encourage emergence of from them who can come out with solutions to meet the possible challenges of future.

Indo-international collaborations like the Sri Ramachandra Medical College–Harvard Medical International partnership and the collaboration between JNMC, Belgaum, and University of Illinois at Chicago can be safely regarded as successful attempts to inculcate new ideas in the faculty development programmes in India.

### The Present

At present Health Regulatory bodies in India have started making it mandatory for each teaching institute to come with their own faculty development department or Teachers Training Department. The aim is to orient new teachers to principles of



education technology.

The basic workshop is to be completed by all. Advanced workshop is for those interested in higher educational techniques. Such workshops can be done directly at regional teachers training institute for example at the MET cell Pune or in the parent institute under the supervision of moderators appointed by the State or National Regulatory Authorities.

An International organisation -The Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER) is also involved in such activities all over the world. It has multiple part time as well as fulltime course for the same.<sup>[5]</sup>

What then should the content of such programme be? Well it is the context of faculty development which should govern the content of such programme.<sup>[3,6]</sup> Specialists in this field<sup>[7]</sup> have further stressed that such programmes should involve a group of teachers from same institute, assess them prior to the programme, involve them in designing the necessary programme, encourage theory as well as practice during sessions and support them even after the programme. This alone can bring in the much needed change in institutional environment.<sup>[8]</sup>

#### The Future

Not long ago, Indian Pioneers in this field have proposed a tri-level approach involving training for teaching, training of faculty for quality in medical education and development of leaders in this field.<sup>[1]</sup>

Training the trainer increases teaching efficiency.<sup>[9, 10]</sup> as has been confirmed by the response of participants. There is therefore room for periodic review of the existing programs and development of fresh formats.<sup>[11-13]</sup> Content area for these programs would have to be freshly defined as well.

Maintenance and improvement of quality of teachers training programmes is also the basis for National Accreditation Council for accreditation of Indian.<sup>[14]</sup> Each institute should therefore strive for this path to excellence.

Promoting educational leadership<sup>[15]</sup> requires exposure of the leaders to the recent trends so that development is possible at all levels.

Thus the journey of India on the path of training of the teachers in health sector education is not on a downhill as has been thought by some.<sup>[16]</sup> But it is well begun and almost half done. As Health Regulatory bodies in India have started stressing and encouraging necessity of such programmes at each teaching institute level, many regional, state as well as national bodies have become active. Hence the future looks bright and promises equal status to health sector professionals trained in India as that of any other institute in this world.

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