Postgraduate Medical Education In Pakistan

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At the time of Independence in 1947, only few medical colleges were inherited from British Government. At that time no formal postgraduate medical education was available in Pakistan. For higher studies, doctors mostly use to go to United Kingdom. The need of postgraduate education was identified by our forefathers. They planned provision of higher education that could cater to the needs of the country. This was expected to be region specific (based upon local pattern of diseases) and incorporates advancements in the field of medicine. The ultimate goal was to improve specialist practice and promote research in medical disciplines. This was not an easy task. Keeping in mind the above-mentioned goals, the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP) was established in 1962, through an ordinance, by the Government of Pakistan.  

Since its establishment CPSP has strived hard to achieve the assigned tasks. A dynamic approach was pursued with the help of national experts. In this regard, collaboration was also made with sister institutes of United Kingdom, regional countries and World Health Organization (WHO). A Department of Medical Education was established in 1979 with the assistance of WHO at CPSP. The purpose was to monitor ongoing teaching and training programs as well as develop new curricula that must be community oriented and reflective of latest advances, both in basic sciences and clinical subjects. This department was later designated as “National Teachers Training Centre” and in 1996 declared as “WHO Collaborating Centre for Research and Training in Educational Development of Health Personnel” for the Eastern Mediterranean Region. This department also holds workshops, seminars and conferences to educate, train and up-date postgraduate trainees and trainers in various disciplines. The number of postgraduate training programs has crossed the figure of 85.

With rapidly advancing technology and incorporation of new evidences, based upon research, the practice of medicine is growing fast. This poses new challenges to existing health care system. In order to make relevant and task oriented residency programs, a need of quality education cannot be ignored. Towards this end, CPSP has started a program of Health Professions Education. By enhancing skills of medical faculty, it is expected that teaching, training and assessment of trainees shall improve. Teachers must be trained to improve their teaching skills with incorporation of principles of adult learning. The learner based outcome oriented curriculum development, including competency identification, assessment methods etc. Video conference facility was provided so as to facilitate faculty members' participation.

Postgraduate medical education must be planned in such a way to produce specialists as required by the country. While Pakistan's requirement of specialists is far from being fulfilled but still a large number of fellows are not satisfied with their current status. CPSP has thus taken an initiative to provide job opportunities and training slots for junior fellows and consultants in different countries. This program is running successfully. Many young fellows have found specialist and consultant positions, particularly in the Middle East. Residents are also facilitated to secure training slots in various countries.

CPSP has celebrated its Golden Jubilee in the year 2012. The main theme remained the Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME). World renowned experts made presentation on issues related to PGME. Many national medical educationists also presented their research papers on this theme. A number of plenary talks and workshops were also conducted and participants were provided opportunities to learn new teaching and learning strategies in medical education. This issue of JCPSP is dedicated to the field of medical education. Number of scientific papers published, both from within Pakistan and abroad, reflects interest of our contributors. This is an effort to sensitize medical professionals as to their role in fostering leadership in medical education. Innovations and new ideas in this field can go a long way to boost and enhance quality education to health professionals which in turn produce doctors who would keep up-front their ethical obligations while taking care of patient population.

REFERENCES

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