Research in Emergency Medicine in Pakistan: A Local Perspective

Sir,

The author has shown great interest in improving the research culture in Emergency Medicine in Pakistan through a strategic approach. These comments and suggestions were given in reply to the editorial published related to this important subject. Walsh has highlighted the importance of curriculum development for academic trainees in this specialty. In Pakistan, four years residency training program in Emergency Medicine was started in 2000. Later, this program has shown its impact in improving the patient care in Emergency Department. Curriculum of Emergency Medicine has been developed before hiring the first resident in this specialty. Later on, as the years passed, changes were made in the curriculum according to the local and timely need of the population. Curriculum was later submitted to The College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP) for approval of Fellowship of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (FCPS). Finally, Emergency Medicine was approved for FCPS in 2011 after several revisions of curriculum. Therefore, there is a long journey behind this important task. Even at the undergraduate level, the final year students rotating in Emergency Medicine have a well-defined curriculum which they have to follow; however, this is in the initial phase and needs more improvement.

I completely agree that new institutions be developed in Pakistan especially in public sector hospitals that should have academic Emergency Medicine programs. At the same time, strengthening already existing two institutions having this program to train residents is a major task. To be eligible for FCPS part-II examination in Emergency Medicine, along with other requirements including attending mandatory workshops, rotations in other specialty, completing the e-log book; residents have to submit either a dissertation or a paper related to the specialty during defined period of time under supervision of their supervisor. In order to increase the number of locally trained Emergency Physicians, residents must complete their research in time and take the examination. Residents usually finish the curriculum on time but due to lack of knowledge regarding how to conduct research, they fail to appear in the examination on time. My point of bringing this important discussion in the editorial was to improve the research culture simultaneously with curriculum improvement because we will not get extra time later on for research.

In summary, curriculum development and research should go side by side in Emergency Medicine in Pakistan, as we have already started the program for FCPS in this specialty and are waiting for the leading Emergency Medicine trained future clinicians and researchers to work in our local setting.

REFERENCES