Emotional Intelligence Training can be Incorporated as an Essential Component of Postgraduate Medical Education: Paving the Way Towards the Development of Multidisciplinary Team Culture

Sir,

Emotional intelligence is defined as a type of intelligence that includes the ability to understand and regulate one's own emotions, and the emotions of others and to use this understanding to guide one's thinking and emotions.[1] This term was first coined by Salovey and Mayer in 1990.[1] Daniel Goleman stratified emotional intelligence into five components, *viz* self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social skills.[2]

According to Druskat and Wolff, the most effective teams are emotionally intelligent. A team can attain emotional intelligence by establishing optimal team performance norms that help to build trust, enhance team cohesion, and ultimately achieve desired results.[3] The innovations in treatment strategies and advancing technologies have changed the practice of providing patient care. Now the entire spectrum of healthcare depends on the collaboration of multi-disciplinary teams for desirable patient outcomes. Healthcare providers accustomed to independent practice must learn to participate in multidisciplinary team meetings. It is a difficult transition that demands training courses to improve communication and collaboration skills. It is necessary to understand behaviours to modify practices. The role of emotional intelligence (EI) for healthcare professionals becomes critical at this stage. EI enhances physician skills leading to improvement in patient management and staff experience, particularly in the times of healthcare crises such as pandemic.[4]

EI is appreciated as a valuable leadership attribute. It is one of the essential healthcare-specific leadership competencies. Physicians must develop eloquent leadership competencies and practise them at all levels of patient care delivery. Therefore, embedding this core training in medical education curricula is imperative. The basics of leadership and teamwork competencies should be a part of both undergraduate and postgraduate medical education (PGME) curricula and training.[5]

Given the evidence supporting the importance of EI skills for healthcare providers and considering the transformation of healthcare environment, and lack of understanding of key concepts of EI among our physicians, the authors of this manuscript strongly recommend the inclusion of basic leadership skills development training as an integral component of a post-graduate medical study plan. As we are actively interacting with international colleagues now *via* postgraduate exchange programs, this is imperative to move towards more global interactions on a reciprocal basis. In addition to clinical training, we have included leadership skills development program as a mandatory component of the structured study plan.[6]

It is high time that medical mentors must learn and guide the next generation of physicians to develop their leadership abilities for a more effective and efficient healthcare system. One possible solution is to have learning objective-based interactive teaching sessions with the field specialists, who have expertise in teaching emotional intelligence to business school students. This step is expected to be an effective way to enhance the PGME leadership training program.

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The authors declared no competing interest.

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