

CPSP in Focus: A Hub of Trust, Standards, and Global Partnership in Postgraduate Medical Education

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The College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP), established by an Act of Parliament, stands today as a pillar of academic rigour, professional integrity, and international credibility in postgraduate medical education. Over six decades of steadfast commitment to high-quality training, CPSP has evolved into a globally recognised institution, contributing not only to Pakistan's healthcare system but also to international medical education frameworks.

CPSP's structural framework reflects its central role in the national medical training landscape. With 13 Regional Centres and 4 Sub-Centres across Pakistan, the College ensures equitable access to standardised training, monitoring, and evaluation systems. This nationwide presence strengthens healthcare delivery by promoting consistency in curriculum implementation, trainee support, and quality assurance mechanisms even at remote locations of this vast and the 5th most populous country.

Beyond infrastructure, the College's strength lies in its faculty, examiners, and academic leadership. Their collective efforts ensure a system grounded in transparency, merit, and continuous quality improvement. The institutional philosophy—ensuring standards, accountability, and fairness in postgraduate training—remains central to CPSP's mission. Entry *via* comprehensive FCPS-1 examination in 13-broad disciplines based on the MBBS curriculum ensures that only bright and best embark on their training in a discipline of life and death. Intermediate Module Examination (IMM) in the form of TOACS after 2-years of training ensures that entrants are getting quality training based on the required knowledge, skills and ethics. Close monitoring *via* a unique online Log-in CPSP portal (<https://eportal.cpsp.edu.pk/eportal/eportal>) ensures attendance, mentorship, and standardisation for both trainees and trainers throughout training, which may span from 3-7 years.

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This is followed by a comprehensive written and practical exit FCPS-II exam where frequently external examiners from prestigious Postgraduate colleges such as the Royal colleges of UK and Canada are invited for first hand experience and feedback. Yet another unique strength of FCPS training is to equip these trainees with basic research methodology, literature review, statistics, and manuscript writing, with the mandatory requirement of publishing at least one original manuscript in a medical journal recognised by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC). For this purpose, CPSP plays its due role to promote the culture of research by its monthly publication, Journal of College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (JCPSP: <https://www.jcpsp.pk>) since 1992 and having Clarivate Impact Factor, in addition to two relatively recent companion journals, including JCPSP-PG (<https://jcpsppg.pk>) and JCPSP-Case Reports (<https://www.jcpspcr.pk>).

CPSP's expanding global engagement signifies growing confidence in its training standards. Strategic academic linkages with institutions and regulatory bodies in UK, Ireland, USA, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Oman, among others, demonstrate increasing global collaboration. Participation of distinguished dignitaries from prestigious global institutions at the International Medical Education Conference 2026, February 4-8, further underscores the College's recognised role in regional and international collaboration and academic dialogue. Those representatives acknowledged CPSP's robust examination and training systems, institutional governance, and commitment to continuous improvement, solidifying the College's position as a trusted institution in postgraduate medical education.¹

Collaboration with the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) represents an important step toward aligning postgraduate training with internationally benchmarked competencies. Similarly, engagement with the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) reflects CPSP's commitment to strengthening continuing medical education and lifelong professional development.

Active participation in global forums such as IAMRA and earlier contributions to IMELF, ICRE, and ICME conferences demonstrate CPSP's academic visibility and its contributions to international discussions on regulation, standards, innovations, and medical education reforms.

One of CPSP's most significant initiatives has been the development of structured overseas training pathways. The CPSP-UK collaborations have facilitated high-quality training opportunities for hundreds of residents. Approximately 740 residents are currently engaged across multiple UK institutions under structured programmes that exemplify global mobility grounded in mutual academic recognition. The CPSP Scholarship Programme, developed in collaboration with UK partners and incorporating examination exemptions through the General Medical Council framework, reflects a model of trust and equivalence in standards and assessment process.

Similarly, the long-standing partnership with Ireland's Health Service Executive, spanning twelve years (2013-2025), has trained 845 trainees under an overseas rotational framework with IMC examination exemption. This collaboration model, recognised at the Irish Healthcare Awards in 2017 and 2024, illustrates sustainable international cooperation.

These initiatives follow the principle of "Brain Gain, Not Brain Drain." Rather than promoting permanent migration, CPSP's structured pathways promote skills enhancement abroad with reintegration into Pakistan's healthcare system. In doing so, the College strengthens domestic capacity while maintaining global exposure and professional growth.

Recognition of CPSP's credibility has also been reflected in international forums and ceremonial acknowledgement. During Pakistan's 78th Independence Day celebrations in Dublin, Ireland, Dr. Sarfraz Mahmood Mir, Regional Director of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP) in Ireland, was honoured with a recognition award. This acknowledgement from international academic leaders, such as Prof. Kevin Barry of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, further affirms CPSP's credibility.²

The recent formal recognition of Fellowship of the College of Physicians and Surgeons (FCPS) by Qatar marks a significant

milestone, reaffirming global confidence in CPSP's standards and opening professional opportunities for Pakistani physicians in the Gulf region.

As CPSP advances into the next phase of its institutional development, the strategic focus remains clear: continuous quality improvement, transparent governance, and alignment with international best practices. Accreditation achievements and collaborative frameworks must continue to be complemented by innovation in digital learning, competency-based assessments, research integration, and faculty development.

By continuously refining its system and embracing educational innovation, CPSP preserves its institutional legacy while ensuring its commitment to transparency, merit, and accountability in medical education. The College's future vision—anchored in standardisation, accountability, and ethical leadership—reflects an institution conscious of its national mandate and global role.

In an era of rapidly evolving healthcare challenges, postgraduate training must prepare physicians not only as clinicians but also as scholars, educators, and leaders. CPSP's enduring strength lies not in the display of power, but in the power of its example. Through principled engagement and sustained commitment to excellence, the College continues to redefine the potential of a national postgraduate institution on the global stage.

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