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## EXPANDING HORIZONS TO THE EAST: REPORT FROM NCHPE 2017

Jorhat (Assam), 7-11 November 2017



The ninth National Conference on Health Professions Education (NCHPE 2017) was organized at Jorhat Medical College, Jorhat, Assam from 7-11 November 2017. The theme of NCHPE 2017 was 'Faculty Development: Expanding Horizons-Fostering Change'. Dr Purnima Barua was the Organizing Secretary.

The conference was significant as the Academy successfully expanded its horizons to the eastern part of the country, which gave much needed prominence to health professions education. Keeping in view the needs of this region, faculty development was chosen as the theme. The conference provided several opportunities for health professions educators across several disciplines to network.

***“Teaching needs to be recognized and rewarded.”***

- Dr. Avinash Supe

***“We need to make a paradigm shift from a testing culture to an assessment culture.”***

Debate on  
“Exit Exam: Cure or curse”



The delegates had the opportunity to listen and interact with stalwarts in the field of health professions education during the keynote addresses, panel discussions and debates which followed.

Chief Guest, Dr Ved Prakash Mishra spoke on the challenges and future direction of faculty development in India. Dr. Rita Sood gave the audience a glimpse into the history of medical education initiatives in India, which led to the initiation of the National Conferences and formation of the AHPE. Dr Tejinder Singh shared his views about the advent of competency based curricula, accreditation requirements, increasing societal expectations and the models of faculty development and transfer of training, which would be a key factor in keeping abreast of these changes. Dr Thomas Chacko discussed various aspects of academic leadership and mentoring of faculty towards expertise and excellence. Dr Avinash Supe highlighted the authorship matrix for scholarship of discovery, application or integration in his talk titled ‘Scholarship of Teaching: Creating an enabling environment: its evaluation, rewards and recognition’. Dr Rashmi Vyas discussed global efforts at faculty development and discussed the initiatives, innovations and implications for India.

The conference livened up with a debate on the topic “Exit Exam: Cure or curse”. It was moderated by Dr Anshu, while the participants included undergraduate students (Mr Yash Saini, Ms Janumoni Senapati, Mr Abir Kumar Baruah, Mr Amartya Bhuyan) and faculty (Dr Jyoti Nath Modi, Dr Khan Amir Mahroof, Dr Upreet Dhaliwal, and Dr Tejinder Singh). While participants agreed with the concept of an exit exam, they raised huge doubts about the manner of its implementation and worried about removing the existing pattern of longitudinal assessment. They echoed the need to make a paradigm shift from a testing culture to an assessment culture.

*“How do we become that teacher - the one who teaches, inspires, mentors, is approachable and caring, and is respectful in general, but also particularly respectful of diversity in the student body?”*

Heard in the Symposium in Changing Needs of the New Generation of Students



Dr Anand Zachariah emphasized on the two essential ingredients for curricular reforms: the teachers and the curriculum itself. Dr Avinash Supe, Dr Rita Sood, Dr Shital Bhandary, Dr Jyoti Nath Modi, Dr Atul Chandra Baro and Dr Himanshu Pandya participated in the panel discussion on “Balancing clinical workload with teaching”. A symposium by Dr Navjeevan Singh, Dr Satendra Singh and Dr Seena Biju used data from student feedback from HIMS, UCMS, Assam and others medical colleges to highlight the changing needs of the new generation of students and emphasized what students expect from their teachers.

Dr AM Ciraj stressed the role of faculty development for inter-professional education and its ever increasing need in the current context of education. Dr Sanjay Bedi highlighted the use of digital platform and use of digital resources for faculty development in this digital era.

Besides these, delegates shared their innovations and research experiences in health professions education through an interactive e-poster session. Thirteen pre-conference workshops and two combined workshops were also conducted from 7- 9 November 2017.

More than the conference it was the simplicity, warmth and the amazing Assamese hospitality of the organizing team which won the show. The Jorhat team have set a trail which the others have to follow.



## THE DIFFERENT SHADES OF SOCIAL OBLIGATION AND MEDICAL COLLEGES IN INDIA



### DR.SUCHETA DANDEKAR

FAIMER (PHIL 2010), IFME 2014,  
MHPE (University of Keele, UK, 2018)  
Professor and Head  
Dept. of Biochemistry & Clinical Nutrition,  
Seth GS Medical College & KEM Hospital  
Mumbai

*WHO defines the social accountability of medical schools as, “the obligation of medical schools to direct their education, research and service activities towards addressing the priority health needs of the community, region, and/or nation they have a mandate to serve.”*

The ultimate goal of medical colleges in India or anywhere else in the world is to improve the health of people, be it physical, mental or social. This is invariably attempted by juggling the three-pronged approach of educating the future health professionals; conducting relevant clinical research; and delivering comprehensive patient care. To make this possible, amalgamation of the social determinants such as behaviour, environment and social conditions and the values associated with social obligation (quality, equity, relevance and effectiveness) need to be adhered to.

Quality in health care has the community in mind and where treatment is person- and situation-specific and should be coordinated to serve the complete needs of a patient or a citizen. Equity implies that all persons from the community have equal access to the health services. Relevance is adhered to, when the most important health problem is identified and treated on priority such that the person, groups, society and community benefits. Effectiveness is achieved when all the available resources and infrastructure are put to optimal use to benefit individuals and the population. Establishing these values are the key towards social accountability.

It is nearly 22 years since WHO defined social accountability of medical schools as, “the obligation of medical schools to direct their education, research and service activities towards addressing the priority health needs of the community, region, and/or nation they have a mandate to serve. The priority health needs are to be identified jointly by stakeholders namely, governments, healthcare organizations, health administrators, health professionals and the public” (Boelen and Heck, 1995).



*Faculty of our medical schools have a large responsibility of inculcating this into the system by taking into confidence the governing bodies, community, institutional administrators and students. The understanding of the importance of this symbiotic relationship cannot be denied.*

The terms 'social obligation', 'social responsibility', 'social responsiveness', and 'social accountability' are often used interchangeably. At the moment, students from our medical schools are 'being taught' 'social responsibility' by sending them to the rural health centres and making them work as per the Medical Council of India (MCI) norms. When some of our students take part in blood donation camps, when they visit the community during floods, when they respond to the epidemics, they are being 'socially responsive'. Most of the times, this is tackled on a voluntary basis. The more the students from a medical school come forward, the more it is a reflection of the effectiveness of our teaching. However, how prepared are we for all the principles to be tested remains debatable. This shall lead us to becoming 'socially accountable', when we are ready for an evaluation and accreditation process. Sensitizing of the stakeholders regarding issues of social accountability and accreditation is important. This, perhaps, shall be the much-needed step in making a positive impact on the society.

Medical educationists have acknowledged the challenges faced by Indian medical schools and suggested that if progress has to be made, it should be based on contextual planning of the curriculum, such that it incorporates the health needs of the community and encourages sound educational research, with the governmental agencies also seeing eye-to-eye. Researchers have suggested the identification of current and prospective social needs and challenges, adaptation of education programs to meet these needs and, evaluation to show that the society has benefitted from the interventions.

We realize that there is a need to work collaboratively by advocating changes to the health system. Faculty of our medical schools have a large responsibility of inculcating this into the system by taking into confidence the governing bodies, community, institutional administrators and students. The understanding of the importance of this symbiotic relationship cannot be denied. Some medical schools are no doubt, closer to implementing a model of social obligation as compared to others.

*Dr Himanshu V Pandya has been nominated as President-Elect of the Academy of Health Professions Educators for the year 2018*

By considering the creation of different steps of social obligation and their implementation to match society needs, it is hoped that medical colleges shall make a great contribution to health and give positive answers to the following questions:

- Is compulsory rural posting a step towards achieving social accountability?
- With the help of a framework with benchmarks, will we be able to identify factors which shall promote positive health outcomes in the society?
- Will medical colleges have to relook their vision and mission statements?
- Will respectful partnerships lead to transformative social changes which shall pave a path towards a better understanding of self and the profession?
- Will this help us avoid the clustering of health professionals in the urban areas?
- In the long run, by inculcating the values of social accountability, shall we be able to contain the migration of our health professionals?

Answers to all these and more shall be the stepping stones towards fulfilling our commitment to the society.

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## DR HIMANSHU PANDYA NOMINATED PRESIDENT ELECT FOR 2018



Dr Himanshu V Pandya has been nominated as President-Elect of the Academy of Health Professions Educators for the year 2018. Dr Pandya is Professor of Medicine and Medical Education, Pramukhswami Medical College, Karamsad, Gujarat. He is also Associate Dean for

Clinical Services, Pramukhswami Medical College, Karamsad and Dean, Faculty of Medicine, Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat. Dr Pandya is Chairman, Professional Development Group, H. M. Patel Center for Medical Care and Education, Karamsad. He was awarded the CMCL-FAIMER Regional Institute Fellowship in 2007. He has also been awarded the FAIMER-CenMEDIC-Keele University Diploma in Health Profession Education: Accreditation and Assessment and Fellowship of 'Leading for Change in HPE by Karolinska Institute, Sweden (2010)

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Dr Amol Dongre

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**UPCOMING EVENT**

**NCHPE 2018: 10<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Health  
Professions Education  
15-17 Nov 2018**

**NKP Salve Institute of Medical Sciences & Research Center, &  
Lata Mangeshkar Hospital (NKPSIMS & LMH), Nagpur**

***Invitation from the Conference Secretariat***

**Welcome to Nagpur, the Heart of India**

NKPSIMS & RC Nagpur spreads the red carpet to welcome you all to NCHPE 2018, the annual National Conference of Health Professions educators across the nation on 15, 16 and 17 November 2018. The family of NKPSIMS & RC comprises of VSPM Dental College and Research Centre, VSPM College of Physiotherapy, VSPM College of Nursing and MD College of Nursing in the same campus.

NCHPE 2018 with its unique theme of **Competency Driven Health Professions Education: Initiatives within and beyond classroom** will be an innovative and highly engaging conference where there will be brainstorming, online (video) and interactive sessions on many important issues related to competency based medical education. Delegates will get an opportunity to interact with the learned faculty of national and international repute, friends and colleagues.

We the organizers, promise to offer you the best of scientific and academic feasts, heart-stirring hospitality and a great interaction.

So don't lose the opportunity to visit NCHPE 2018 and register yourself on our website: <http://nchpe18.in/>

**Dr. Suresh Chari**

**Dr. Shubha Gade**

For details on how to become an AHPE member, please visit: <http://ahpe.in/membership/>  
AHPE members may send reports about educational activities organized or announcements related to upcoming events in health professions education for publication in the News Bulletin to [ahpe.secretariat@gmail.com](mailto:ahpe.secretariat@gmail.com)