

## EDITORIAL

### SCOPE OF MEDICAL COLLEGES IN PRIVATE SECTOR

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Medical profession is still the most sought after profession, there are thousands of bright students who pass their F.Sc examination in First Division and desire to join medical colleges but are unable to get admission in government medical colleges. There is a great shortage of doctors in the country. Hundreds of young students go abroad for medical education, costing huge sum of foreign exchange to the families and to the government spending 5 to 7 years and obtaining degrees which are not recognized in Pakistan. Therefore to fulfill the demand of the public, and to overcome the shortage of doctors in the country and to save the valuable foreign exchange, private sector medical colleges are much needed in Pakistan. However, establishment of medical colleges is very expensive and difficult. PMDC is very firm in implementing its rules and regulations. Those colleges which fulfill the laid down requirement of PMDC, help in overcoming the shortage of doctors in the country and provide much needed health care to the population. Such medical colleges are much appreciated by the public and by the govt. Such private sector medical colleges have great future and some of them may become famous and outstanding like the private sector medical colleges in the USA.

**Medicine** is the noblest of professions. Doctors deal with suffering humanity, patients come with pain, agony and disability, after kind and humble efforts of medical professionals and the mercy of Allah they return healthy and comfortable. In response doctors achieve respect, prayers and blessings.

Perhaps that is why Medicine is still the most sought after profession. After passing matriculation examination, the best students securing highest marks select premedical group in F.Sc to join a medical college.

In Pakistan, every year, about 30,000 students, pass F.Sc premedical examination in First Division, securing over 60% marks and apply to get admission in medical colleges. About 4000 get admission in public sector medical colleges and the remaining about 26,000 do not succeed though they are very keen to join this profession and serve the ailing humanity. Out of these unsuccessful candidates every year about 800 who can afford, go abroad to Russia and other former Soviet republics, China, Philippines and Caribbean states for medical education and over Rs. 4 billions of foreign exchange of Pakistan is spent on these students. For about a year they have to learn the local language and in most cases these medical educational institutions are not recognized by Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) with the result that they are not able to practice in Pakistan and the time and money of the students are wasted. Establishment of standard medical colleges in Pakistan in private sector benefits such Pakistani students, saves the Government of Pakistan's valuable foreign exchange and helps to overcome the shortage of doctors in the country.

The number of doctors registered in Pakistan at present is about 110,000. It is estimated that about 25000 Pakistani doctors are working abroad. Leaving 85000 for a population of about 150 millions making a ratio of one doctor for 1764 persons. The doctor population ratio/recommended for developing countries like Pakistan by W.H.O is 1 doctor for 1,000 populations. At this ratio the requirement of doctors in Pakistan for 150 million population is 150000 doctors. This shows that we require another about 65, 000 doctors in the country to fulfill our own needs. A shortage which appears very difficult for the public sector medical colleges to overcome.

Until recently government had undertaken the responsibility of training doctors almost free of cost. It is free of cost when it is considered that against the expenditure of about Rs. 6 millions which is incurred on training of one doctor, the government has been charging a nominal tuition fee of about Rs. 20, 000 to 50,000 in five years.

**Private Sector Medical Colleges:**

Realizing the importance of training more doctors, the government increased the number of seats in medical colleges in seventies. This resulted in over crowding which was affecting the standard of medical education, therefore, on advice of Pakistan Medical & Dental Council (PMDC) the number of seats in medical colleges had to be reduced and the private sector was invited to assist in training of doctors.

Initially, the Aga Khan Medical College was established in private sector. It has done well and earned good reputation for its standard of medical education. Some more medical colleges were started. A few of them not coming up to the standards laid down by the PMDC had to be closed. PMDC is the controlling authority to see that the standard of medical education is maintained in the country.

Some of the best medical colleges in the world are in the USA and from among those the top medical colleges are in the private sector, like Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Stanford, Yale, Mayo, etc. every student desires to study at these medical colleges as against in the government sector medical colleges. In spite of the fact that the education at these private medical colleges is four to five times more expensive,

Similarly, every doctor wishes to do post-graduation study and consider it a great honour to work in these private sector medical colleges and their hospitals. Harvard was established 222 years ago, may be after a few years medical colleges in private sector in Pakistan will also attain such great heights. The first private sector medical college the Aga Khan Medical College is an example.

It is hoped that one day in future like in the USA students wishing to become doctors in Pakistan will also prefer to receive education in private sector medical colleges in spite of the fact that education in government medical colleges is more or less free or at nominal cost.

In the general education sector, the private sector schools & colleges are far ahead in imparting quality education as compared to government sector schools and colleges. This is due to the fact that private sector general education started over 100 years ago. A time will come in near future that private sector medical colleges like Harvard will be most sought after.

The government medical colleges train about 4000 doctors each year and out of a total of 85000 doctors in the country, about 2000 die each year, about 500 leave the country and go to practice abroad and about 200 particularly lady doctors stop practicing the profession. Only about 1300 doctors are added each year to overall total. In this way it is just not possible to overcome the shortage of 65000 doctors even during the next 50 years.

The only alternative is to encourage the private sector to come forward and train and educate doctors. In his budget speech in 1984 Dr. Mahboobul Haq had suggested that the public sector cannot afford to establish more medical colleges to train doctors. He further stressed that no new medical college should be opened by the government and the teaching of medical doctors should be left to the private sector.

Considering the importance of overcoming the shortage of doctors in the country, the provincial governments have established 2 new medical colleges in N.W.F.P, 3 new medical colleges in Punjab and one new medical college in Sindh in the last three years.

#### Medical Colleges In Pakistan:

At present in Pakistan, there are 32 Medical Colleges, recognized by PMDC. Sixteen in Government sector and 16 in the private sector. The list of recognized medical colleges is given in the table below:

Province	Public Sector	Private Sector
<b>Punjab</b>	1. KE Lahore	1. Lahore MC, Lahore
	2. FJ Lahore	2. Fatima Memorial,Lhr
	3. Allama Iqbal, Lahore	3. Islamic Int. R,Pindi
	4. Nishtar, Multan	4. Foundation, R,Pindi
	5. Qauid-e-Azam, B,pur	
	6. Punjab, Faisalabad	
	7. Rawalpindi, R,Pindi	
	8. Army, Rawalpindi	
<b>Sindh</b>	1. Dow, Karachi	1. Agha Khan, Karachi
	2. Sindh, Karachi	2. Hamdard, Karachi
	3. Liaquat, Hyderabad	3. Mohammad, Mirpur
	4. Chandka, Larkana	4. Isra, Hyderabad
	5. Nawabshah	5. Jinnah, Karachi
	6. Karachi MDC	6. Sir Syed, Karachi
		7. Zia-ud-Din, Karachi
		8. Baqai, Karachi
<b>NWFP</b>	1. Ayub Abbottabad	1. Frontier, Abbottabad
	2. Khyber, Peshawar	2. Kabir, Peshawar
		3. Women, Abbottabad
<b>Baluchistan</b>	1. Bolan, Quetta	
<b>Islamabad</b>		1. Shifa Int

The above are the Medical colleges recognized by PMDC. There are some other medical colleges which are not recognized by PMDC. There were yet some other medical colleges in the private sector, which have been closed down under direction of PMDC.

PMDC is the statutory body of the Government responsible for maintaining high standard of medical education in the country under the PMDC Ordinance of 1962.

PMDC has prepared a standard curriculum for medical education which is followed in all medical colleges in Pakistan. It has also prepared guidelines proposing the number of teachers and other staff required in each subject based on the number of admissions in a college each year.

PMDC also provides guidelines regarding the space for the college, its administration, basic departments and hospitals. The space means lecturer halls, laboratories, demonstration rooms, dissection hall, the library, the museums and hostels and of course the equipment needed in each department. For the hospital, there should be at least 5 beds per admission in one year.

PMDC Inspection teams inspect all medical colleges from time to time to see that the requirements are fulfilled and standard of medical education is up to the mark.

If PMDC finds deficiencies, they advise the colleges to improve and if colleges fail to improve PMDC recommends to the provincial governments to close such medical colleges.

In the last few years, on PMDC's recommendations following medical colleges have been closed:

1. King Fahad Medical College, Karachi
2. Vohra Medical College, Karachi
3. Ravi Medical College, Lahore
4. Bhutta Medical College, Faisalabad
5. Margalla Medical College, Islamabad
6. Imam Hussain Medical College, Islamabad
7. Rajput Medical College, Islamabad
8. Khattak Medical College, Peshawar

There are some other medical colleges which have yet not fulfilled the PMDC laid down requirements, therefore, these have yet not been recognized by PMDC. In addition, some more new medical colleges have sprung up, which have yet not been inspected by PMDC for recognition as they do not fulfill the basic laid down criteria.

Medical Colleges are not like colleges of general education both in government and private sector. Most medical colleges are larger than many public sector universities. In addition to imparting education to students to become doctors, these medical colleges both in the public and private sector establish hospitals which help the government in overcoming the shortage of health facilities in the country.

Many commercial entrepreneurs also jumped into the field considering it a profitable business, but they soon realized the difficulties and just went back or their colleges had to be closed. Establishment of a medical college is a very difficult venture. Not only that huge sum of money is required to establish the hospital, the medical faculty is

very much is short supply in the country. Almost half of our total number of medical teachers are employed abroad mostly in the Middle East and also in other countries. What to say of private sector medical colleges, many government medical colleges are short of medical faculty. To overcome this shortage it is possible that medical teachers will be needed to be imported from abroad and this will not be easy.

The medical colleges which are already established in the public or private sector, most of them have gone through the initial difficult period and they have built their hospitals and obtained reasonable faculty, therefore, it is likely that they will go on, as it has been seen that most of these medical colleges have made good progress towards excellence, they have established their own good hospitals, acquired good faculty, providing very good education. However, for new medical colleges it will be extremely difficult to fulfill the basic requirements laid down by PMDC.

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