

## Teaching the Teachers - Where next with Faculty Development?

Dear Editor:

I commend the authors (Srinivas DK and Adkoli BV) for recognizing the challenges faculty development faces in India [1].

Steinert [2] describes faculty development as:

*"...a planned program, or set of program, designed to prepare institutions and faculty members for their various roles, with the goal of improving instructor's knowledge and skills in the areas of teaching, research and administration"*

The professionalization of medical education, increasing accountability and the pursuit of educational excellence have made faculty development a pressing need for providers of not only undergraduate but postgraduate medical education [3].

The authors raised concern over non-involvement of North-East region and revival of NTTC. In this regard MCI's initiative is laudable which identified eight nodal centers namely (i) Maulana Azad Medical College, New Delhi; (ii) Christian Medical College, Ludhiana; (iii) Kalinga University, Bhuvaneshwar; (iv) Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Swangi, Wardha; (v) Seth G.S. Medical College & KEM Hospital; (vi) Smt. NHL Municipal Medical College, Ahmedabad; (vii) Sri Ramachandra University, Chennai and (viii) St. John's Medical College, Bangalore to organize and conduct basic course workshop in Medical education technologies for faculties [4].

To elaborate it further, in North India Maulana Azad Medical College was given the task to cover 31 medical colleges to sensitize them with a fundamental workshop and it included colleges from North-East. This nodal center conducted MCI 1<sup>st</sup> basic course workshop in Medical Education technologies on 3-5 November 2009. However, the participation from North-East was nil. University College of Medical Sciences (UCMS), Delhi's MEU conducted this basic workshop not only at its own centre but went a step ahead by sensitizing Gajra Raja Medical College, Gwalior's faculty to these methodologies as well on 12-14 April 2010 [5]. Faculty development's basic principle is "to teach is to learn twice" and UCMS is following this by empowering its own faculty as well as facilitating others.

Comprehensive faculty development, which is more important today than ever before, should be built upon professional, instructional, leadership and organizational development [6]. The latest Harvard Medical School study provides report of a 10-year experience strategy as a useful starting point for the stakeholders to take [7].

The philosophy behind faculty development is exactly the same as that of pedagogical active learning strategy that students "learn best by doing, not by watching or listening". The same holds true for andragogy. Empowering trained faculty members to sensitize others should be the norm to achieve this goal. One example is MEU of UCMS where trained faculty members from faculty development workshop are entrusted with the job to train their senior residents in the yearly venture STEP (Senior resident Training on Educational Principles).

The recommendations by the authors are entirely appropriate given Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's reluctance, and are consistent to maintain and develop the wisdom, to attempt to work together in a deliberate way towards a fairer and better future for all.

I would be remiss if I did not reiterate one crucial point

"Life is not having and getting, but being and becoming"

~ Mathew Arnold

### **References**

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