

## Continued Medical Education

A doctor when acquires his basic medical qualification, he is been certified by his medical college or university that he has acquired sufficient knowledge and skills and eligibility, this degree (MBBS) MB is been honored to him.

Now some of the doctors continue to work in various fields of medicine and keep on learning with an aim to get higher diploma. The post graduate qualification fellowship degrees, or masters degree which intern, keep this graduate abreast with medical knowledge and latest development within field of medicine and surgery.

Few of those graduates, they enter in the field of family medicine and general practice, they are either been employed by governmental authorities to work in the peripheral hospitals. Where they can deal minor disease and when acute surgical and medical emergencies present in their centre, which they cannot manage in peripheral clinic they usually refer these patients to higher centre and tertiary care hospital.

A good number of doctors established their own practice in the form of small clinic and they deals with respiratory tract infection, diarrhea, fever, etc. and whenever they receive patient with acute emergencies like acute appendicitis, acute cholecystitis or perforated duodenal ulcer they will refer to higher centre.

We need to have some system to evaluate all doctors who are still practicing medicine. Their need to be some kind of process or tool which ensures that the medical knowledge and skills of the above medical practitioners up to the mark.

In developed countries they have a system of CME (continued medical education). CME is composed of 'educational activities' that serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, performance and relationships that a physician/clinician uses to provide services for patients, the public or the profession.<sup>1</sup> In

some places the word continuing professional development (CPD) been used. Includes educational methods beyond typical educational formats including self-directed and learner-centered approaches<sup>2</sup>. Depending on its purpose CPD can be viewed as a method to keep track on clinical, managerial and professional development, and is closely associated with revalidation and appraisal.<sup>3</sup> In a study carried out in America by Bennet Nancy L., Davis et al suggested new vision of CME. They describe their interpretation of the nature and value of CME (optimal CME is highly self-directed; the selection and design of the most CME is based on data from each physician's responsibilities and performance). They then present seven action steps, suggestions to begin them, and the institutions and organizations they believe should carry them out, and recommend that the AAMC (Association of American Medical Colleges) play a major role in supporting activities to carry out these steps. (For example, one action step is the generation and application of new knowledge about how and why physicians learn, select best practices, and change their behaviors.) Six core competencies for CME educators are defined. The authors conclude by stating that collaboration among the appropriate academic groups, professional associations, and health care institutions, with leadership from the AAMC is essential to create the best learning systems for the professional development of physicians.<sup>4</sup>

CME and CPD are equally important in maintaining high quality health services and it by law practicing doctor should acquire designated CME hours depending on the law of country (90-120 hours) or more in the field of medicine. Only after acquiring and attending these CME credits (activities) the doctors become eligible so that his certificate can be renewed for 3 years or 5 years depending on the rules of governing authority.

In Pakistan also lot of continuing medical educational activities are going on and the doctors are also keen to learn but those doctors who have been practicing in rural areas, remote cities which are far away from main cities, where tertiary hospital are located. We do not have any process to evaluate their knowledge and skills of these doctors, many years after their graduation. There is no doubt that this is very important requirement in any country.

Many countries of the world by law enforced the practising doctors to complete CME hours before submitting their document for renewal of continuing medical practice.

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