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Only 4% doctors do rural stint

Rest skip mandatory service, pay Rs 38.81 crore in penalties

Poornima Nataraj

BENGALURU, DHNS: Only four in every 100 doctors took up their mandatory stint of rural service in the past decade, with the rest paying the government a penalty instead.

The Karnataka government has collected a whopping Rs 38.81 crore from MBBS, post-graduate and diploma students by way of penalty.

Of 12,682 medical graduates who studied under the government quota since 2006-07, only 522 have served in the villages. Only 91 of 5,348 diploma and post-MBBS students took up rural service.

The government insists on rural service to provide health-care in places where medical care is deficient.

Doctors completing post-graduate courses are reluctant to work at the primary health centres. They say their specialisation can't be put to use at the PHCs, which work with

Docs' reasons for refusal

- Infrastructure inadequate
- Specialisation can't be put to use
- No protection from disgruntled crowds

Their monthly salaries

- **MBBS:** Rs 35,000-40,000. (One year rural service mandatory)
 - **Post-graduate diploma:** Rs 45,000 (Three years rural service mandatory)
 - **Post-graduate specialisation:** Rs 55,000 (Three years rural service mandatory)
- Provided by government during rural service



basic amenities.

It is true doctors specialising in disciplines such as forensic medicine, microbiology, pathology, and biochemistry can't put their advanced skills to use at the PHCs, but the government, which subsidises medical education, banks on them to provide basic care in the villages.

Doctors with post-graduate specialisation want to be

treated on a par with assistant professors and paid higher salaries. Officials say that can't be done.

Some say they have no protection from crowds that sometimes rough up doctors when a patient dies.

Dr Sita (name changed), who completed one year at a village near KR Pet in Mysuru district, faced many challenges during her tenure.

"We can perform normal deliveries. But if the case is complicated, we refer it to a bigger medical facility, and the patient's family suspects we are shirking," she told DH.

The BJP government introduced the Karnataka Compulsory Service Training by Candidates Completed Medical Courses Act of 2012 which made it mandatory for all medical students to serve in rural areas.

The High Court had granted stay on the implementation of the Act.

The Congress government in June this year introduced The Karnataka Compulsory Service Training by Candidates Completed Medical Courses (Amendment) Bill.

It lays down that those doctors who register with the Karnataka Medical Council (KMC) will have to mandatorily put in a year's rural service. If they don't comply, they are free to practise in other states.

NRI students likely to get nod to take CET from this yr

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

@ Bengaluru

NON Resident Indian (NRI) students, who want to get into undergraduate professional courses, are most likely to be allowed to write CET from 2018, according to sources in the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA).

Considering repeated requests made by several parents, the authorities have decided to give NRI students a chance. But first, the department of higher education has to bring an amendment to the Karnataka Professional Educational Institutions (Regulation of Admission and Determination of Fee) Act, 2006.

Under the existing system, NRI students cannot appear for CET. For admission into professional courses, they are dependent on the government's 15 per cent NRI quota, under which they have to pay higher fees.

A parent said, "The NRI quota seats are limited. Even the fee charged is very high when compared to those who get

admission under CET or COMED-K quota. If the state government allows NRI students to be a part of CET, it would help a lot."

A senior official from KEA said, "Before submitting a proposal to the government about including NRI students, we have to study the matter and propose amendments. Considering all the legal options, the same will be submitted to government for approval."

As per the information available from KEA, every year atleast 500 students seek admissions to undergraduate professional courses under NRI quota.



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Senior official from KEA

College in Mysuru on Friday | EXPRESS

NAAC revises framework to make higher education more robust

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Mysuru

DIRECTOR of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) Dr Dhirendra Pal Singh on Friday said the council has revised its framework in the wake of increase in number of institutions offering higher education.

Addressing a gathering during the 8th Asian Association of Schools of Pharmacy conference at JSS Medical College here, Singh said the framework has been revised to make it more robust, objective, transparent and outcome oriented.

Singh reasoned that it is essential to take steps as most of the institutions are moving towards international recognition.

Elaborating on the pharmacy science, Singh asserted that the pharma-related associations should play a key role in orienting the human resources to ad-

dress the issues at global level.

Stressing on the integration of education and industry, he said it is also a challenge for the institutions to prepare the students to match the requirements of different countries.

Tracing the history of pharmacy education in the country, Singh said the significance of pharmacy science has been realised of late and has also continued to evolve in the last one decade. It all began with the paradigm shift in the realm two decades ago, with the introduction of courses starting from Banaras Hindu University followed by Madras University and Dr Harisingh Ghour Vishwavidyalaya in Madhya Pradesh to name a few.

Ageing populace

President-elect of Asian Association of Schools of Pharmacy Dr Fe Lin Lin Wu said the recent challenges on health front in the

forms of ageing population and emergence of new diseases provide a window of opportunities for pharmacists to deliver.

While the ways and methods of implementation remains crucial, on the other hand they should also take a cue from the success stories, especially from the west where healthcare is at an advanced stage.

Chancellor of the Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville in the US Dr Randy Pembroke, who spoke on 'A Chancellor's View of a Pharmacy Curriculum', gave a peek into the higher education in his country where it has transitioned from public funding to private funding. While 30 years ago, the government funding was in the range of 80 to 90% in the field of higher education. Vice-chancellor of JSS University Dr B Suresh was conferred with the fellowship of Commonwealth Pharmacist Association.