

PEDIATRIC RESIDENT TRAINING IN CAMBODIA

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The medical education pathway in Cambodia is divided into three cycles, which is then further subdivided into the basic medical program and the clinical program (Fig 1). Following completion of high school, students complete a national selection exam, and if successful, enter a foundation year course. They then continue on to Years 2 and 3, after which they will attain a Certificate of Basic Medical Sciences (constituting the first cycle).

They will then pass onto the second cycle, which includes Years 4 to 6, which takes them to attain a Bachelor of Medicine (BM). This cycle is a semi-clinical program: in the morning, students perform their clinical practice in hospitals, and in afternoons will attend formal education in classroom settings.

Following this cycle, students can choose whether to immediately continue on to Years 7 and 8 to attain certification to practice as a General Medical Doctor (GP), or to complete a selective exam to enter a three-to-four year residency training program leading to a Specialized Doctor Diploma (DES).

The Pediatric Training Program in Cambodia first started in 1997 at the University of Health Sciences, which is the only University in Cambodia that offers a formal Pediatrics Residency training program. The medium of instruction is French. The goals of the program are to encourage residents to pursue the continuing acquisition

of knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes that allows for implementation of pediatrics in accordance with international standards, and also to match the regulations and professional standards stipulated by the Cambodian Ministry of Health.

Pediatric Residency in Cambodia is a three-year training program that includes both theory and clinical practice. Theoretical teaching is delivered through directed clinical training, seminars, and university training in classroom settings. This constitutes 149 credits. One credit is equivalent to 15 hours of theory and 45 hours of clinical training. In total, residents will complete 718 hours of theoretical training and 4,230 hours of clinical practice (Fig 2).

The contents of residency training

The contents of residency training in Cambodia are divided into modules as shown in Table 1. Training is delivered in clinics, ward rounds, clinical demonstrations, and journal club reviews. Lectures, tutorials, clinical meetings, seminars, as well as clinical research and/or clinical studies supplement this training (Table 1). Fellowship training is not available in Cambodia; therefore residents are advised to attend Practical Attachment Training (fellowship) for 6-24 months in France or other countries. Most residents will attend their fellowship training in France.

At the end of each module, residents complete a written examination, and at the

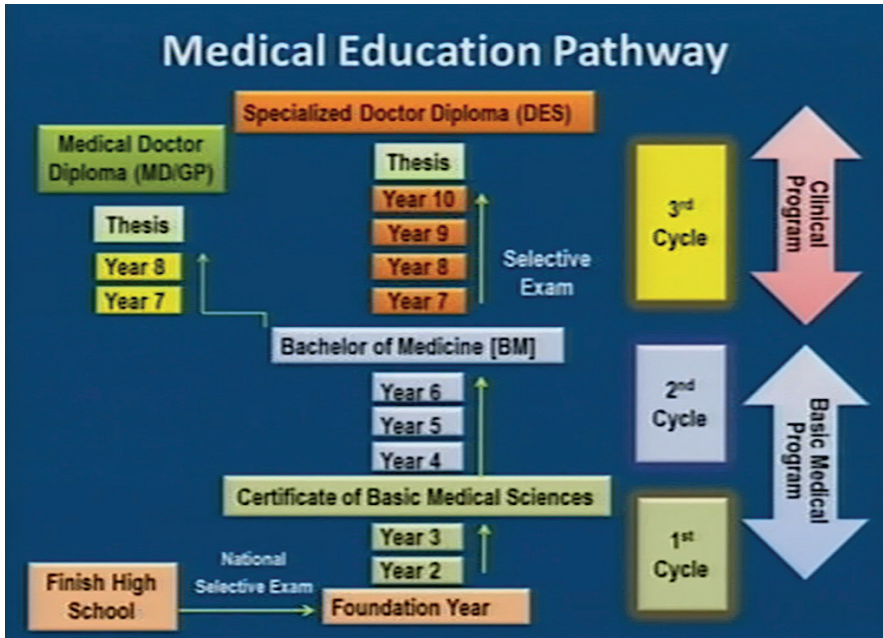


Fig 1–Medical education pathway.

Structure of curriculum

Year	Theory						Clinical Practice	
	Directed Clinical Training		Seminar		University Training		Hour	Credit
	Hour	Credit	Hour	Credit	Hour	Credit		
Y1	75	5	45	3	138	9	1,080	30
Y2	75	5	45	3	110	7	1,440	30
Y3	75	5	45	3	110	7	1,710	30
Total	225	15	135	9	358	23	4,230	90

Total: 149 Credits [Theory :718 Hours (47 Credits)
+ Clinical Practice: 4, 230 Hours (90 Credits)
+Thesis: 12 Credits]

Fig 2–Structure of the curriculum.

Table 1
Module contents of curriculum.

Contents
General pediatrics
Neonatology
Cardiology
Infectious diseases
Gastro-hepato-enterology
Pediatric radiology
Endocrinology
Neurology
Emergency
Pediatric surgery
Uro-nephrology
Pneumology
Hemato-onco-immunology
Medical research

end of each year, they complete written and oral examinations. They then complete a final examination at the end of Year 3, which consists of written and oral examinations, with evaluation of clinical rotations to be certified as pediatricians. Currently there is no national examination for Pediatric Certification in Cambodia. From next year onwards, there will be entrance and exit examinations planned for pediatric residency training, as there are now currently four universities that offer medical training in Cambodia.

Following graduation, the newly qualified pediatricians are assigned to work in the pediatric wards of national hospitals, referral hospitals, or in private clinics, in accordance to the needs at the time.

There will be a review of pediatric residency training. There is a plan to increase the current training program from three to four years, with additional structural changes of the program.

Q&A

What happens if the candidate fails to gain a certificate of Basic Medical Sciences? Is it possible for them to go onto Year 4?

No, all candidates must successfully pass examinations in Year 3 and gain a certificate of Basic Medical Sciences before progressing on. This is also the case to progress from Years 3 to 4, 4 to 5 and 5 to 6, as there is an end-of-year examination for each year.

If a student decides not to continue onto Year 4 after gaining a Certificate of Basic Medical Sciences, can they do anything with that certification?

No, it can only be used to progress through to a Bachelor of Medicine.

How many graduates does Cambodia produce each year from this Pediatric Training Program?

Fifteen each year; from 1997 to 2012, the program has produced 120 pediatrician graduates.

What is the pediatric population of Cambodia?

There are nearly 5 million children (<15 years-of-age). They are aware that they produce too few pediatricians for the population necessary to serve, however, there are only three hospitals in the country that meet the training criterion of the program, such as laboratory services and ward facilities which then limits the number of training places they are able to offer.

For Cambodian general practitioner trainees, how many rotations are they required to pass through for pediatrics?

General Practitioner training in Cambodia requires the trainee to pass through four specialties: Medicine, Surgery, Pedi-

iatrics, and Ob/Gyn. The trainee will spend six months on clinical rotation in Pediatrics.

How many general practitioners are there in Cambodia?

There are approximately 4,000 in Cambodia, but there are also graduates who have trained from other countries who work in Cambodia.

As the academic language of the program is French, do you have any difficulties in communicating with local people?

As the academic language in Cambo-

dia is French, each module it is arranged for a French professor to provide lectures. Thus far, there have been no difficulties with communication. However, due to economic problems, not all of 15 graduates have been able to continue fellowship studies in France. Only 30%-40% are able to do so. This is the reason why they are planning to add an additional year to pediatric training in Cambodia.

Is fellowship sponsored by the government or self-sponsored?

It is funded by the French government.