PEDIATRIC RESIDENT TRAINING IN MYANMAR

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Pathway to pediatric residency

Undergraduate medical training in Myanmar has now been reduced to six years, plus a one-year working program. Subsequently, the newly qualified doctors are expected to work in a government hospital for two years before being entitled to sit for the entrance examination to begin the three-year pediatric residency training, which culminates in a Master of Medical Science degree. Those in private practice are not permitted to join this program but can only continue in family practice.

The medical schools

There are five medical schools in Myanmar, with four being civilian and one military. All use the common government curriculum with the same undergraduate and postgraduate examinations.

Master of Medical Science (Pediatrics)

This program has been in existence since 1976, conducting a thorough three-year training in teaching hospitals, for up to 50 residents selected annually from those who have passed a rigorous written examination and interview. The trainees, who are under consultant supervision, obtain clinical, communication, and ethical skills through ward rounds, bedside teaching, grand rounds, and clinical meetings.

During the second year, the residents are posted to non-pediatric wards such as eye and ENT, and pediatric subspecialties for up to 18 weeks.

Assessment

At the end of the 9-month stage, the trainees sit for the summative assessment that is equivalent to MRCPCH Part 1 in UK. An essay-type question will be adopted in the future to replace Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQ). A comprehensive test takes place at the end of their training, in which the candidates go through theory paper and practical examination. All five medical schools contribute both in setting the examination and in their representatives acting as examiners.

The residents are required to submit a dissertation proposal, usually by the end of the first nine months, which is ultimately assessed by two readers. At least 60% pass mark must be achieved in the theory and clinical parts to acquire the degree.

Other postgraduate pediatric programs

Once completed the pediatric training, it is possible to go on for doctorate degree in general pediatrics and neonatology. There has been a trend for studying overseas for two years in Malaysia, Singapore and Serbia.

Problems and challenge

Many challenges remain, namely, the need for improved facilities and resources, together with high quality research are required in order to make good progress.

Career

The three main career choices for pediatricians are working in a medical university, various hospitals nationwide, and in research.