



Social Accountability in Medical Schools – Do the Students Account About It?

* Surekha A	Assistant Professors, Dept. of Community Medicine, Mahatma Gandhi Medical College, Pondicherry * Corresponding author
Suguna Anbazhagan	Assistant Professors, Dept. of Community Medicine, Mahatma Gandhi Medical College, Pondicherry
KEYWORDS	

Dear Sir
It is well known that “Medical education needs to be socially responsible, socially responsive and accountable” according to Global consensus for social accountability of medical schools document.¹ Social accountability which is aiming for the better health of the society have a responsibility to accept and acknowledge their role in improving the health of society and many medical schools have accepted the challenge. It has become increasingly clear that social accountability is necessary to maintain a cutting edge and to excel in the market place. The concept not only involves professionals, faculty and others involved, medical students need to be taught in the curriculum the need for social accountability. The model should incorporate the need, various techniques and principles involving students, ethical values and research scope and robust activities.

Still there are gaps in the literature around the key factors, both externally and internally, influencing medical schools advancing towards social accountability and the way in which they should operate. We need a process of critical analysis to identify the most important key influences of socially accountable medical education, the building blocks which motivate students to involve and learn about social accountability and there need to be a guided actions. The actions are very different depending on the context but if actions are thoughtfully applied and consistent with the building blocks then this might support further movement towards socially accountable medical students.

Despite the initiatives, the concept of social accountability and knowledge among medical students is still in the fledgling stages. Also, the lack of awareness about the concept and implementation has been a real challenge for all. The move needs to come in the wake of framing a conceptual framework that can be adopted by medical schools aspiring towards greater social accountability.

In the long run, institutions will have to play a bigger role in contributing to the better of the society and the nation. Looking at a broader picture, a new outlook on the curriculum reflecting the needs of the nation, redefining our scopes and objectives, recognizing teaching strategies and planning for country-centric research is essential. This should aim at preparing the student for the world through streamlined educational experience and kindle him for life-long learning and contribute to a global outreach.

Social accountability in medical education needs to be added to a modified curriculum, because it is an important subject of medical sciences education.² being able to **demonstrate** this by providing evidence that its work is relevant, of high quality, equitable, cost-effective.³ As far as

the quality of its graduates is concerned, its aim is to produce change agents with capacity to work as well on health determinants and contribute to adapting the health system.

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