

Renaissance of ophthalmic medical and surgical educational training during COVID-19 pandemic

Dear Editor,

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the healthcare systems and brought unprecedented changes in the medical and surgical training patterns across the globe.^[1] With exponential rise in cases and COVID-19 challenges, training came to standstill and students were forced to do regular COVID-19 duties, miss classroom lectures, compromise bedside clinical teaching, surgical training, and exams got postponed or cancelled.^[2] The only alternatives were e-learning, zoom lectures, dry and wet lab training, and growing use of teleophthalmology for attending patients. This has left some permanent voids in teaching curriculum, which may take some years to be back on track.^[3] As correctly highlighted by Parija *et al.*^[4] that numerous lessons were learnt during this pandemic and future directional planning is needed to combat this. The letter nicely highlights all the major changes in training curriculum; however, we have few important adds to strengthen and safeguard the training curriculum across the country.

Few of the important add are-

1. The students performing rigorous COVID-19 duties especially in medical colleges can be divided into alternate day teams to reduce the viral load and risk of infection.
2. In non-COVID-19 ophthalmology-dedicated hospitals, besides attending online teaching classes and webinars, the students can also prepare for competitive exams like FAICO, FICO, MRCS, and FRCS.^[5]
3. The teaching institutes can conduct basic research methodology and statistics classes which can be a potential add to the teaching curriculum.
4. Once the lockdown is relaxed and patients' volume increases, besides wet lab surgical training, the students can be shifted to single case per OT under supervision to practice their hard learned wet lab skill during the pandemic.

5. The pandemic can also be taken an opportunity to research and publish by trainees with minimum of one to two submission in reputed journals under the guidance of mentors.
6. The hospitals and medical colleges can collaborate with other tertiary eye care hospitals and start virtual grand rounds for continued enhancement of medical education.

Compliance with ethical standards

The article has not been submitted elsewhere for consideration of publication. The article complies with the ethical standards by Declaration of Helsinki.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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