

Faculty Development Initiatives

Teachers have been teaching using traditional strategies and frameworks for generations. Faculty development is a planned activity aimed at improving the performance of departmental faculty members by focusing on the improvement of individual knowledge and skills of faculty in relevant areas.¹ These skills include teaching, administrative, research, and clinical skills.

Continuous medical education is a praiseworthy path to keep the educationist in liaison with the novel trends in their field. Faculty development programs aim to foster excellence and innovation by empowering teachers through innovative teaching methods and sharing evidence-based best practices and experiences.²

Faculty development programs and activities enable the transmission of knowledge and skills while simultaneously reinforcing and/or altering conceptions about teaching. They also provide conceptual frameworks for activities on a natural basis. These programs include activities undertaken by teachers to improve teaching skills in different settings, such as individual and group.³

Individual approaches to faculty development comprise active learning, such as short and long courses on teaching and learning. Individual-level faculty development addresses teaching and learning attitudes/beliefs, provides knowledge about educational principles and instructional design, and develops teaching and curriculum-designing skills along with educational leadership.⁴

On the other end, structured faculty development activities such as workshops or longitudinal programs are typical examples of group approaches to faculty development. This help generates learning opportunities, recognize and rewards excellence in learning and teaching, and addresses impediments such as system issues to effective educational practices. These approaches include inviting a "Think Tank" on faculty outcome specification and implementation strategy for the program, conducting an invitational workshop on faculty development and conducting self-evaluation of faculty through questionnaires, conducting a Faculty-Wide workshop, meeting of "Think Tank" on the formulation of evaluating strategy for faculty development and finally, an invitational workshop for all on evaluating faculty development programs.⁵

Faculty development is aimed at helping institutional, and faculty members acquire the relevant and maintenance of their current and future vitality. Despite faculty development being often referred to as a planned activity designed to implement multi-role preparation for teachers, it is a practice for clinicians to participate in both formal and informal faculty development to enhance their knowledge and skills.⁶

Certificate programs are becoming increasingly current in many institutions. Governing bodies have certification requirements for faculty members regarding teaching and learning, which is useful to individuals interested in educational leadership and scholarship. Master in health profession education programs is becoming increasingly popular in many settings. Most universities and Governing agencies in Pakistan require faculty members to obtain a certificate in teaching and learning. At the same time, many medical colleges provide opportunities for advanced training. It is essential to identify one's needs, determine one's method(s) of learning based on preference and then select an activity.

Teacher expectations and demands for accountability in higher education are increasing and will make the need for professional development proliferate. Workshops are becoming popular owing to their innate flexibility and portrayal of active learning.⁷ Having various durations, workshops are also a common agent to promote skill acquisition or help teachers to prepare for curricular change.

Army Medical College is working diligently to maintain its position in the country among flag-bearers of quality by providing a credible faculty development program that implements evidence-based methods. The Army Medical College is increasingly moving towards upstream policy work, evidence generation, partnership building and advocacy. It is envisaged that there will be a need to introduce and implement a strategic learning/development plan for staff capacity building to achieve intended outcomes. Preparation for developing an appropriate capacity-building plan that will maximize the current capacity of staff along with the induction and training of the new faculty with upgraded skills and knowledge base is a fundamental step. The aim is to advocate the implementation of the Educational Strategic Plan's learnings and to teach principles through a holistic faculty development program covering the continuum of medical

Development Initiatives

education, targeting students and faculty members and contributing to developing a scholarly curriculum.⁷

Faculty development programs address the professional development needs of faculty, support individual faculty having educator roles and promote sharing of best practices among faculty members and affiliated teaching sites. As a result, faculty can work in harmony with the other basic and clinical teachers for integration and achieve the objectives of these best practices.

REFERENCES

1. Dath D, Iobst W. The importance of faculty development in the transition to competency-based medical education. *Med Teach* 2010; 32(8): 683-686. doi: 10.3109/014215114659X.2010.500710.
2. Steinert Y, Cruess S, Cruess R, Snell L. Faculty development for teaching and evaluating professionalism: from programme design to curriculum change. *Med Educ* 2005; 39(2): 127-136. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2929.2004.02069.x.
3. McLean M, Cilliers F, Van Wyk JM. Faculty development: Yesterday, today and tomorrow: AMEE Guide no. 33. *Med Teach* 2008; 30(1): 555-584. doi:10.3109/01421591 003677905.
4. Atherton JS. Learning and Teaching; Bloom's taxonomy [Internet] available at: <http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/bloomtax>. (Accessed on October 12, 2022).
5. Harden RM. Outcome-based education—the ostrich, the peacock and the beaver. *Med Teach* 2007; 29(1): 666-671. doi:10.1080/0 1421590701729948.
6. Harden RM, Sowden S, Dunn WR. Educational strategies in curriculum development: the SPICES model. *Med Educ* 1984; 18(4): 284-297. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2923.1984.tb01024.x.
7. McKimm J, Swanwick T. Setting learning objectives. *Br J Hosp Med (Lond)* 2009; 70(7): 406-409. doi: 10.12968/hmed.2009.70.7. 43125.

Dr Khadija Qamar
Professor of Anatomy
Army Medical College
National University of Medical Sciences (NUMS)
Rawalpindi-Pakistan