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Editorial

Reshaping the foundation of healthcare in India: The urgent need for medical college residency reform

Amol Ravindra Hartalkar ¹*¹Dept. of General Medicine, BKL Walawalkar Rural Medical College & Hospital, Chiplun, Maharashtra, India

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India's healthcare system is at a crossroads, and the current state of medical college residency programs is a major concern. The very foundation of our healthcare infrastructure is crumbling under the weight of outdated teaching methods, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of emphasis on resident well-being.

As the healthcare landscape continues to evolve, the cornerstone of medical education – residency programs – faces unprecedented challenges. The current state of medical college residency is plagued by systemic issues, compromising the quality of training, resident well-being, and ultimately, patient care.¹

Resident doctors in India are overworked and undervalued, with excessive workloads, long hours, and limited resources. This leads to burnout, compassion fatigue, and a high risk of medical errors. The lack of mentorship, feedback, and support hinders their skill development and confidence.

The grueling workload, excessive hours, and lack of work-life balance have become a toxic norm, fueling burnout, depression, and anxiety among residents. This not only affects their physical and mental health but also erodes empathy, creativity, and the joy of healing. The consequences are far-reaching, with decreased job satisfaction, increased medical errors, and a looming shortage of skilled physicians.²

Furthermore, the curriculum is often outdated, with limited focus on modern medicine, research, and innovation. This leaves residents ill-prepared to tackle the complexities of healthcare in India, including infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, and healthcare disparities.

Also, the traditional rigid teaching model fails to foster critical thinking, innovation, and collaboration. Residents are not adequately equipped to navigate the complexities of modern medicine, including the intricacies of electronic health records, interdisciplinary teamwork, and patient-centered care.³

To address these challenges, we need comprehensive reform:⁴

1. Overhaul the curriculum to emphasize modern medicine, research, and innovation
2. Implement duty-hour reforms and prioritize resident well-being
3. Invest in infrastructure, technology, and simulation-based learning
4. Foster a culture of mentorship, feedback, and support
5. Encourage research, innovation, and collaboration

By transforming medical college residency, we can cultivate a new generation of compassionate, creative, and competent physicians, equipped to navigate the complexities of modern healthcare. The time for reform is now – let us reshape the foundation of healthcare to prioritize excellence, empathy, and the well-being of our future physicians.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: amolhartalkar@gmail.com (A. R. Hartalkar).

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Author biography

Amol Ravindra Hartalkar, Professor  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0213-9175>

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