

## REPORT

## The Foundation Course at College of Medicine and JNM Hospital, Kalyani: A Report

Neloy Sinha✉

The College of Medicine and JNM Hospital, Kalyani is under direct stewardship of The West Bengal Health University (WBUHS). There was an anxiety of performance and execution of the month long Foundation course at the beginning of the academic year of new batch of students, particularly for the first time without any precedence or ground rule other than the guidance of the **CISP** (Curriculum Implementation Support Program) module after a three days' brain storming course at Jorhat, Assam, at the designated MCI regional centre for the Institutions.

Regarding foundation, it remind us instantly, Isac Asimov, an American writer and Professor of biochemistry at Boston University, and his intricate series of futuristic novels on Foundation.

Coming back to the foundation, it is a saga of mankind loosely linked to the Roman Empire, but encompassing the future too. The recently inducted 'foundation course' is also serving the same purpose. This unique course is introduced on the promise that the learned situation analysis, knowledge base, public relation, management skills, communication and leadership qualities of the **IMGs (Indian Medical**

**Graduates)** would be assessed once they pass out, in their daily/ professional life and at various working environment. The benefits of the participation would be appreciated in the clinical and professional judgement. In a lighter note, this statutory course is an anticipatory safety measure, vis a vis a warning to be careful about all the professional short comings which may interfere with the career and public life.

The inauguration programme started with recitation and songs that matched and blended with the ambience of the hall. Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of The West Bengal University of Health Sciences addressed the students with a touch of affection and cordial note. His message was pertinent to the aims and goals of future Indian Medical Graduates (IMGs) and he explained the nuances of health related advances and applications of the science and at the same time the role of WBUHS as a statute body. Several parents came forward to express their feeling in the second half of the Inaugural day. They were eager and excited to reveal the background story of their sacrifice behind the 'dream come true'. They openly talked about the hardship of the family as a whole in this mission. It was not surprising to see that all the successful

*Received:* 27 October 2019

*Accepted:* 12 November 2019

*Published online:* 01 July 2020

*Citation:* Sinha N. The foundation course at College of Medicine and JNM Hospital, Kalyani: A report. J West Bengal Univ Health Sci. 2020; 1(1):12-14

MEU Co-ordinator and Prof & HOD, Dept of Dermatology, College of Medicine & JNM Hospital, WBUHS, Kalyani

✉ email: neloysinha@gmail.com

candidates were diligent and hard working throughout their scholastic career.

As a facilitator of the course I can present a mixed bag of feelings. On one hand, it was new and challenging and how to conduct it in an efficient way! On the other hand, it was challenging to keep a track on the students who were joining late or leaving for a greener pasture for a second counselling. In the first two weeks we were uncertain about the students who were continuing with us. Late joiners missed a good number of the initial lectures. Due to the time constrain initial topics could not be repeated.

Over and above the month of August had 4 Sundays and three holidays including the Independence day. A programme was organised in the morning of the Independence day with National anthem and flag hoisting as a mark for national integration. A blood donation camp was in the work map at another part of the hospital. An interactive sensitization programme on blood and organ donation was conducted day before. Thus response, respect and accountability were shown by the students. There was also a ceremony of white coat initiated by the Principal, College of Medicine & JNM Hospital, WBUHS.

The course was conducted as per the schedule with the help of the MEU core members and the other faculties as and when needed, be it in the group discussion or during a panel discussion. With the passage of time it was observed that the 2019 batch was a homogenous one with multiple talents and extracurricular ambitions and hobbies. They were found good at debate, explicit at extempore and expressive in open forums. As a result, with the passage of time most of the sessions turned out to be more interactive and fruitful.

The external experts for subjects like Computer, English and Yoga, fulfil their

commitment regarding punctuality and content of their speciality. The Yoga teacher stressed on the relaxation methods as stress buster. The English teacher was fluent and friendly with the students. The e-etiquette taught to us was fruitful. So was the class on common misconceptions and mistakes we ignore in daily practice when English was the defacto lingua franca. The computer teacher gave the outline of effective internet search and basics of Microsoft's office and their use in medicine and scientific research.

A classical programme on spirituality was undertaken by the auspices of Ram Krishna Mission. Swami Divyananda Maharajji blended spirituality with the health care system by multitude of quotes and examples from real day to day life where the heroes were common citizens. His totalitarian view on health and humanity left a deep impression on the mind of the fresher.

The reflective analytic process started immediate after the beginning of the course, with the feedback from the participating new batch of students regarding the performance of facilitators. There was in-house discussion during the sessions regarding formative assessment of the ongoing foundation course. At the end of the journey, we reached to certain conclusions (thought not absolute) regarding improvement of our performance and practices as follows:

1. A simple handout could be distributed to the students regarding the aims and goals of the Foundation Course.
2. At the end of each session there should be a window of discussion with the faculty to iron out the confusion.
3. A robust Medical Education Unit (MEU) is needed for sensitizing our faculties for their further involvement during the Foundation course.
4. Faculties should be trained at nodal and or regional centre on every opportunity.

5. Involvement of the preclinical department is a vital part in this foundation course, because of the subtle change in the syllabus.
  6. Experience to manage with the current faculties are needed for small group teaching. Their feedbacks will be helpful for better communication.
  7. An in-house booklet is needed to aware the students about the aim and expectation of the Foundation Course both from the teacher's as well as student's perspective. There are already a few books in the market, but this course is primarily institution specific, depending upon the strength and weakness of a particular one. Copying the aims and goals of another institution could be the last resort.
  8. The students are encouraged to maintain a diary for their daily thought and progress. As this is not a summative or formative assessment students should understand the greater implication of this course as a means of icing upon completion of a coveted and complex course.
  9. The library of the institution should have specific rack with books and relevant journals that would stimulate the faculties for further guidance.
  10. MEU should be represented by every speciality for balanced opinions and working policies.
- The administrative goodwill and help towards further integration would obviously strengthen the Foundation course.