Journal of Saidu Medical College 2012; 2 (2)

IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING BIOETIHICS IN MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS

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Medical ethics is merely one branch of general ethics, and it is precisely defined by professor Dunston as "Obligations of moral nature which govern the practice of medicine"[1] the morals are based either on religion, philosophy or socio culture traditions. The three basic moral obligations in a doctor- patient relationship are beneficence, patient autonomy and justice the practice of medicine, in a board philosophical sense, is a search for the truth and all the ethical and moral principles are inbuilt and inseparable with in this search. More pragmatically, Medicine is both and art and science. The aspect of science in medical is very easily understood like making a measurable observation that leads to hypothesis. The truth of hypothesis is subsequently validated by relevant observations and tests for significance. On the other hand the art in the medicine is an immeasurable quantum, which according to Bertrand Russel is the art of rational conjecture. It is very fascinating that the medical professionals have been some of the best philosophers though the history of mankind and they have explained the abstract theories of classical philosophy into practical actions at bedside. The practice of medicine required education, knowledge and wisdom born of experience. It has to be taught to the medical students and its ethical responsibility of a society to make sure that it's actually done.

Why it's important to teach medical ethics in medical colleges because evidence form world indicates that students have felt their ethical values challenging in hospital environment[2].

A study conducted in Karachi on the house officers concluded that 65% of respondents noticed the medical practice as unethical because of senior doctors, and unfortunately this disillusionment of young doctors with the current medical culture in our country brings traumatic deidealization. Such type of feelings erodes the young doctors for their future prespective[3].

Although the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council code of ethics states that Bioethics must be taught in medical colleges, but unfortunately it is a formal part of the medical syllabus to the undergraduate and even postgraduate medical institution with except to Aga Khan Medical University Karachi[4].

The objective of teaching medical ethics does not mean to create bioethicists but to equip the graduate with adequate skills so as that young doctor may be able to identify ethical dilemmas in his vicinity and helps to resolve those problems using knowledge and ethical morals that has been taught during training years.

Its generally agreed that realistic case based discussions are the best way of teaching bioethics, and it is imperative to start it from first year as there are numerous studies that has documented that students start facing ethical challenges right from first year of medical education and should be continued in informal and formal tools like lectures, small group discussions and ethical rounds till final year and beyond that during his postgraduate training[5].It is very simple that if the undergraduates' education is weak, post graduate education will definitely suffer. Ethically speaking, it is preferable to have fewer but well trained postgraduates and specialist. An unethical and in adequately trained specialist is usually involved in a Practice in which he pays attention and feed the machine which benefits him.

It is also ethically imperative for the postgraduates that all invasive diagnostic or therapeutic procedures should be taught and then supervised by peers in their respective fields and sadly it is lacking in some specialties today and unquestionably contributes to iatrogenic morbidity and mortality.

In summary, medical ethics should not relate only to the practice of medicine but to all faces of medical education and it is the decay and salvage the sacred medical profession.

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