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Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation-A New Horizon in Saidu Group of Teaching Hospital Swat KPK

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BACKGROUND

Rehabilitation is a term which is generally perceived to be linked into physical therapy, geriatrics, drug addiction, mental disorders or care of individuals with chronic illnesses. The core concept of rehabilitation is poorly understood among the general public and also in medical professionals. In Pakistan, the general perception about rehabilitation is "physiotherapy" because the department previously named the physiotherapy department were now converted to rehabilitation medicine department after availability of FCPS qualified rehabilitation medicine consultants.[1]

Routinely receive appointment in hospitals mentioning, "Referred to physiotherapy OR for physiotherapy". Considered as a dumping ground for all bed cases of the hospital not requiring further active management. The reason is little awareness among doctor community as well as allied medical professionals and medical students regarding the scope of the field. In KPK the medical teaching institution (MTI) doesn't have rehabilitation medicine departments and permanent designated post of Rehabilitation medicine consultants.

Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PMR), also known as Physiatry or Rehabilitation Medicine is a medical specialty concerned with diagnosis, evaluation and management of person with (Physical) disabilities (PWD) resulting from neurological, musculoskeletal, cardiovascular, pulmonary and other traumatic disorders. The aim is to make them as independent as possible and useful member of society by restoring their physical, social, occupational and vocational functions by a multidisciplinary team (MDT). The MDT involved in Rehabilitation of PWD is led by a specialist in PM&R (Rehabilitation Medicine physician or Physiatrist) are usually consists of allied health professionals but not limited to Physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech language pathologist, clinical psychologist, certified orthotist and prosthetist, rehabilitation nurse, vocational counselor, and social worker to name a few. Physiatrists, or rehabilitation physicians, are medical doctors who have completed FCPS training in the specialty of PM&R. They treat any disability resulting from disease or injury involving any organ system. They manage issues in the entire spectrum, from complicated multiple trauma to injury prevention for athletes. A rehabilitation physician is responsible for medical care as well as rehabilitation needs of an individual.[1]

Inpatient setting, physiatrists are responsible for the medical and rehabilitation care of patients with activity limitations. They deal with a variety of conditions, including stroke, spinal cord injury, acquired brain injury, neuro-degenerative diseases, multiple sclerosis, amputations, orthopedic disorders, polytrauma, and developmental disorders. PMR is a relatively new and emerging specialty in Pakistan and many people including health care providers confuse it with physical therapy only and some form of exercises alone. They are not clear about the scope of this specialty and role of Specialist in PM&R.[2]

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan (CPSP) started the discipline for FCPS in 1997 keeping in view its importance and future prospects for the management of disability in the country. FCPS in PM&R awarded by CPSP is the highest degree awarded in the field of PM&R in Pakistan.

Department of Physical Medicine and rehabilitation An Emerging Specialty

The department of physical medicine & rehabilitation is an emerging specialty in Saidu teaching hospital district Swat KPK.

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In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), we are facing disabilities everyday due to bomb blasts, earthquakes, traffic accidents, and amputation due to diabetes, violence, congenital abnormalities, and natural disasters. Persons with disabilities are mostly unseen and unheard in KPK. The subject population faces overwhelming barriers in Rehabilitation Management, Education, and activities of daily living. Persons with disabilities become a handicap due to social, economic, physical, mental issues, hampering their freedom of movement in society. There is also a pronounced lack of informational data, rules and regulations, rehabilitation centers, mainstreaming and specialized services for persons with disabilities in KPK. All over the world in developed countries every hospital has a department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.[3] Unfortunately in KPK even the Medical teaching institution does not have the department of physical medicine and rehabilitation which impart a structured training program to the PMR residents.

The department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PMR) at Saidu teaching hospital, Swat is the only civilian department accredited with CPSP in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) upon the availability of FCPS PM&R qualified rehabilitation medicine specialist (FCPS PM&R) .

Services
Consultant OPD
Neurorehabilitation: Stroke, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, motor neuron disease, multiple sclerosis, peripheral neuropathies, Parkinson disease.

Musculoskeletal rehabilitation: Osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, neck pain, low back pain, myofascial pain syndrome, fibromyalgia, shoulder pain, adhesive capsulitis, tendinitis, and bursitis

Pediatric rehabilitation: Cerebral palsy, brachial plexus injury, muscular dystrophy, spino-muscular atrophy, developmental delay, spina bifida, traumatic neuritis juvenile idiopathic arthritis, congenital deformities, hip dysplasia

Club foot clinic: in collaboration with orthopedic department

Pain procedure: intra articular steroid, local anesthetic, hyaluronic acid, platelet-rich plasma therapy, muscle, joints, trigger finger and trigger point injection

Electrodiagnosis: NCS EMG

Prosthesis and orthosis: provision free of cost braces and prothesis (PIPOS)

Teaching: Teaching to undergraduate level, post graduate FCPS part 2 trainees, general club, seminars, active participation in clinico pathological conference, training and teaching to allied health professionals such as DPT students from different affiliated colleges with SGTH.

Goals
The main goal of physiatrists is to help people recover lost functions, such as in the case of a person recovering from the functional decline secondary to a stroke. With an accident victim who experiences multiple trauma, the physiatrist supervises therapeutic interventions aimed at restoring function. Once patients stabilize enough to participate in an organized rehabilitation program, the physiatrist recommends the most appropriate level of rehabilitative care.

Short term goals: To restore best level of functional ability, to speed recovery and recover safely and comfortably.

Long-Term goals: The main goal with this care is to provide a safe, supportive, and stable environment where patients can live the highest quality of life possible and engage with others while receiving assistance as needed.

Vision: The vision of department of PM&R is to make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities through multidisciplinary Rehabilitative care to restore fullest possible, physical, mental, social, and economic independence and help in development and dissemination of research / education in the science of Rehabilitation through its activities and partnerships with internal and external communities.

Problems in establishing rehabilitation department.
Lack of awareness and commitment at the department and hospital level.
Missing focus on rehabilitation services
Lack of prioritization, funding, policies and plans for rehabilitation

Deficient manpower: Medical doctors and non-doctors allied health professionals
Human resources: Lack of career growth and established service structure

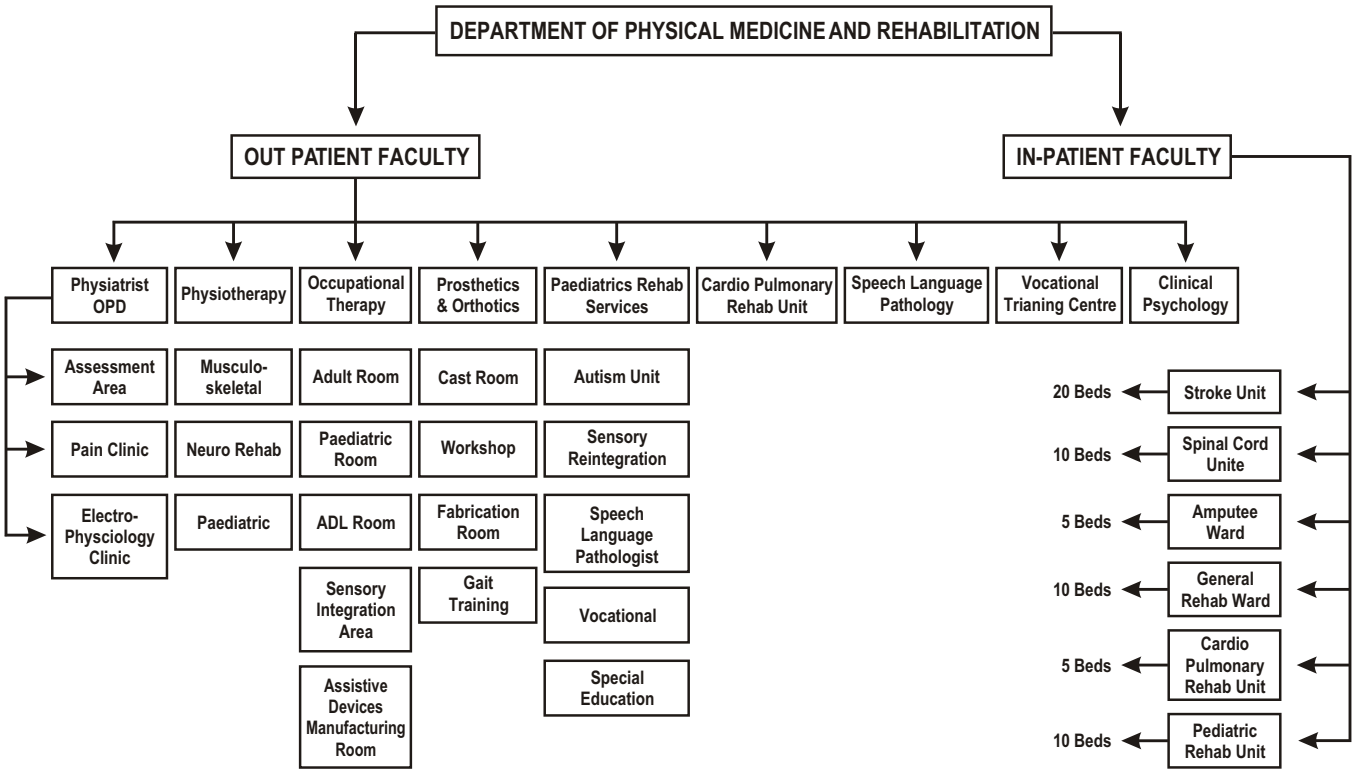
Deficient infrastructure
Equivocal quality of services
Lack resources including assistive technology, equipment and consumables
Lack of awareness in medical professionals and general public.
Ineffective and underutilized pathways to rehabilitation

Future vision:

To establish department of PM&R producing qualified skilled rehabilitation professionals through undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate degree programs along with residency program in physiatry.

To provide comprehensive multidisciplinary rehabilitation services in Cardiac Rehab., Neurological Rehab., Musculoskeletal Rehab and pediatric Rehab.

To establish evidence-based rehabilitation practices with education and research



CONCLUSION

This Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation at Saidu Teaching Hospital will address various types of disabilities, as our province has only one civilian department of PM&R at Saidu teaching hospital, Swat in spite of the fact that our disabilities rate is much higher. Ratio between population and PM&R specialist, the availability of PM&R facilities following hospital standardization must be met. Proper strategies and steps of anticipation must be prepared to tackle this rising challenge. As a nation, we should take serious note of the increasing rate of disabled persons in our community and rise to provide them not only the rehabilitation, they require but also changes at community level to make these disabled independent members of a society. We look forward to your contributions in department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation at STH Swat KPK.

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