



**Editorial**

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## Teaching Physiology in Nepal – an integrative approach in basic sciences

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# Teaching Physiology in Nepal – an integrative approach in basic sciences

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## Editorial

Physiology is one of the most important parts of the medical curriculum. Clear understanding of the body functions is essential to be a good doctor. I worked as Professor in the Manipal College of Medical Sciences (MCOMS), Pokhara, few years back. Lecture-based, teacher-centered, discipline-based, examination-driven, and hospital-oriented teaching pattern is followed in Nepal. Curriculum is divided into Basic sciences and clinical sciences. MBBS is a four and half year's program, which is followed by one year internship. There is scarcity of physicians in Nepal. A large number of new medical colleges are coming up under Nepal Medical Council guidelines, which will help to fulfill this gap. At present there are 18 medical colleges under Nepal Medical Council. Manipal College of Medical Sciences, Pokhara is under Kathmandu University, one of the best and leading medical institutes in the country. Students are coming from Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and other countries attend the four and a half year undergraduate medical (MBBS) course. The MBBS course in Nepal is divided into nine semesters. Anatomy, Physiology, Biochemistry, Microbiology, Pathology, Pharmacology and Community Medicine are taught in an integrated manner during the first four semesters, as a part of Basic science subjects. Community Medicine continues as a part of syllabus till the seventh semester and the clinical subjects like Medicine, Surgery, OBG, Ophthalmology, Orthopedics, Dermatology etc. are taught during the last five semesters of the MBBS course. Postgraduate degree programs in different subjects are offered by a number of govt. and private colleges. At present Tribhuvan University (TU), Kathmandu University (KU), BP Koirala Institute of Health Sciences (BPKIHS) and NAMS (National Academy of Medical Sciences) are conducting TU first started an MBBS program in Nepal in the year of 1978. TU is also considered as the pioneer for starting postgraduate courses in IoM. In the two years course, Physiology occupies a large portion of the Kathmandu University syllabus. We covers all topics starting from basic concepts, autonomic nervous system, hematology, respiratory system, cardiovascular system, gastrointestinal tract and all associated structures, renal physiology, endocrine system, reproductive physiology, nervous system, growth development, musculoskeletal system and immunology. All the basic science departments are coordinated with each other by means of meetings, discussions so that each system should run in a synchronized manner. In the practical we cover hematology and clinical examination of almost all systems

like cardiovascular, respiratory, nervous system *etc.* Problem based learning is another aspect of this MBBS curriculum in Nepal. In third and fourth semester practical curriculum around twenty PBLs (Problem based learning) are in the syllabus. Apart from that there are PBL sessions in MCOMS. It is well known that, PBL is a teaching strategy which promotes not only critical thinking, also makes a medical student creative and self-directed, which is very important in the medical profession. To be clearer, PBL is meaning of the learning, with a proper understanding, which builds the conceptual framework - the basis of medical field. Students are very enthusiastic and interested to attend all lecture and practical classes. End of the semester, there are sessional examinations and end of an academic year (1st and 2nd year) Kathmandu University conducts examinations. Every fifteen days, there is a fortnightly test which covers all subjects [1]. MCOMS Management are always helping and encouraging all sort of research activities every possible way. A large number of research activities involving hematology, questionnaire based surveys, are going on the Department; sometimes in a collaborative manner with other departments like Psychiatry [2-5]. There are also postgraduate programme (MD and M.Sc.) in Physiology Department, where almost all faculty members are involved. So as an overall view, Physiology curriculum, teaching methods, strong collaboration and orientation among various departments and inclusion of PBL makes Physiology easily understandable to the medical undergraduates.

Medical Profession as a Predictor of Future Career Specialization among Medical Students. *Medical Science*. 2013;1(1):3-11.

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