

Editorial

A Step to Restore Dental Profession's Dignity

When the Dental Council of India (DCI) made the BDS degree, a five-year “all classroom” course, dropping the need for any hands-on training with patients in 2007, it was a dark day for many conscientious teachers and some dental students. A teacher would like his/her student to be proficient in his/her work, and a passing out dentist would aspire to be confident in dealing with his patients and rendering standard treatment.

During the period of dental training, the students are learning more of theory with some exposure to the practical aspect, under the complete supervision of teachers. The total orientation at this period is to pass the examination. The outlook during internship is different. The clinical work they do will give them confidence to start their own clinics or join a job. Internships were first introduced in 1992-93, after dental science was recognized as a professional course like medicine and engineering.

It is heartening to see that the Union health minister has approved the reintroduction of a one-year rotational, compulsory and paid internship in the BDS course. According to the Union health ministry, “The revised BDS course—3rd Amendment Regulations, 2011—also incorporate 3 months of compulsory rural attachment.” This is a nice decision since the budding dentist will be exposed to a wide variety of dental problems and will get good hands on experience.

Recent past has seen a lot of dentists doing a variety of jobs, like medical transcription or joining other courses like hospital administration. The reason was obvious; they had a dental degree, but not a dentist's skill or dexterity. To uphold this noble professions' dignity, each one of us should be proud to be a dentist. And, that pride can come only with the confidence in one's ability to render service. Reintroduction of the internship will definitely be a step toward this end.

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