

The Jubilee Year: 50 Years of PGIMER, Chandigarh

The Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh, which is an ‘institute of national importance’, celebrates its Golden Jubilee of Excellence from 7th July 2012 onwards. Compared to many venerable medical schools worldwide, it may not be very old; but in the Indian context, the institute is only 15 years younger than the Indian Republic. The name and fame it has attained over the years mirrors the evolution of our country from a fledgling democracy to that of a vibrant nation, being called a power in its own right.

Within this period of 50 years, the PGIMER has not only made significant contributions to health care in India but also made a mark for its remarkable contributions to medical education and research at the global level. It has now emerged as an institute of outstanding repute and academic renown, and is actually something of a recognizable brand name. Due importance on the national scale has been given in the form of a 5-rupee commemorative postage stamp released on 7th January, 2013 by the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Govt of India. Besides the celebrations, the Institute has planned to introduce several new and innovative initiatives to promote research and capacity building in the health care sector.

The Golden Jubilee Year marks the beginning of a new era belonging to a bright and young faculty with vibrant ideas and enthusiasm. The younger crop also faces the challenge of an ever-increasing patient load that requires to be managed with limited manpower, shortage of space and resultant overcrowding. It has become increasingly difficult to maintain an ideal management system in the hospital. On the other hand, the health-care needs have tremendously increased. The problem is compounded by the fact that there are additional pressures on the doctors from patient expectations compounded by the fears of medical negligence and a hyperactive media.

Many issues have evolved as pertinent today; how and where from to find the time, resources and energy for research and other academic pursuits are the moot questions which every faculty member is now confronted with. This is particularly true in cases of people working in busy clinical departments and laboratories, where time-constraints often limit their focus to primary patient care. Solutions for these problems are neither easy nor straightforward; thus the Jubilee year maybe the time to relook into the issues and reorganize the priorities. A systematic scientific approach is perhaps needed instead of the ad-hoc decisions to solve the problems. However, what cannot be denied is the fact that there still are people who continue to significantly contribute to academics and research, even in the presence of most adverse conditions. But the downside is also significant; such a work scenario actually limits the results that an Institute like the PGIMER can otherwise achieve. Undoubtedly, the working environment must evolve to be conducive for an overall process of research development and patient care delivery, which would lead to optimal achievement in all fields that PGIMER is famous for.

What is the need of the hour? The Golden Jubilee of the PGIMER should serve as the springboard for achievements of new heights and laurels. The Institute possesses an immense talent and dedication which give it a place of pride in both the medical and the social circles. Its alumni spread globally are often the sources of envy for colleagues for their professional competence and achievements.

There is no time to rest. We need to cross the barriers like the ‘thirsty crow’ did in the childhood story—‘Where there is a will, there is a way’.

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